Vol. LXVII—No. 2

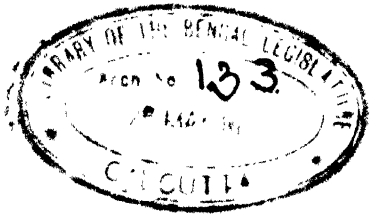
Assembly Proceedings

Official Report

Bengal Legislative Assembly

Eighteenth Session, 1944

18th, 24th, 25th, 26th and 28th February and
1st, 2nd, 3rd, 6th and 7th March, 1944



Superintendent, Government Printing
Bengal Government Press, Alipore, Bengal
1944

GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL.

GOVERNOR OF BENGAL.

His Excellency the Right Hon'ble RICHARD GARDINER CASEY, C.H., D.S.O., M.C.

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN, K.C.I.E., in charge of the Home (Civil Defence Co-ordination) Department.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY, in charge of the Department of Civil Supplies.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI, in charge of the Finance Department.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN, in charge of the Education Department.

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PROSANNA PAIN, in charge of the Department of Communications and Works.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN, in charge of the Department of Agriculture (Rural Reconstruction).

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA, M.B.E., in charge of the Revenue Department (Evacuation and Relief).

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur, in charge of the Judicial and Legislative Departments.

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN, C.B.E., in charge of the Departments of Commerce, Labour and Industries (including Postwar Reconstruction).

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA, in charge of the Forests and Excise Department.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD, in charge of the Department of Public Health and Local Self-Government.

The Hon'ble Mr. PULIN BEHARY MULLICK, in charge of the Publicity Department.

The Hon'ble Mr. JOGENDRA NATH MANDAL, in charge of the Co-operative Credit and Rural Indebtedness Department.

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF THE BENGAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

SPEAKER.

The Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI.

DEPUTY SPEAKER.

SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY, Esq.

SECRETARY.

K. ALI AFZAL, Esq., Barrister-at-law.

THE BENGAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PROCEEDINGS

Official Report of the Eighteenth Session.

Volume LXVII—No. 2.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Friday, the 18th February, 1944, at 4-45 p.m.

Present:

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI) in the Chair, 12 Hon'ble Ministers and 177 members.

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Supply of labour for paddy cultivation.

***99. Mr. HEM CHANDRA NASKAR:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Agriculture Department aware that—

(*i*) a very large number of labourers died of starvation and diseases throughout the Province; and

(*ii*) ripe paddy crops could not be reaped owing to paucity of labour?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps are being taken by Government for supply of labour for paddy cultivation this year?

MINISTER in charge of the AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed Muazzamuddin Hosain): (*a*) (*i*) Government are aware that a considerable number of deaths have taken place among the labour population in Bengal as a result of starvation and illness.

(*ii*) The reports received so far do not disclose any serious shortage of agricultural labour in harvesting the paddy crop in any part of the Province.

(*b*) Though no serious shortage of agricultural labour is apprehended, Government are fully alive to the situation and will take all necessary steps to meet any serious deficiency which may arise. They have moved the Government of India to render assistance if it is required.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the exact nature of the information that the Government have received from the different districts of Bengal regarding labour deficiency?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: The District Officers' reports go to show that there was no serious apprehension of any shortage of labour.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the nature of assistance that this Government have asked for from the Government of India?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: The Government of India were asked to be in readiness to help us with the labour force of the Military Department if possible.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the extent of shortage of labour according to the information received by the Hon'ble Minister?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: The District Magistrates were asked to report whether they apprehended any shortage of labour in regard to harvesting of crops and they said that there would be no such shortage.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: With reference to answer (*b*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the supply of cheap food to agricultural labour is a necessary step to meet any serious deficiency which may arise with regard to labour?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: That question does not arise at all, I think.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: In answer (*b*) it is said that "Government will take all necessary steps to meet any serious deficiency which may arise" I am asking the Hon'ble Minister whether he has considered that the question of supply of cheap food so that agricultural labour may not die of starvation is a necessary step to meet any serious deficiency which is likely to arise?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Supply of cheap food will not create more labourers.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that wages of labour have increased abnormally on account of shortage of labour?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Yes, wages have increased certainly.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware whether Government have taken any steps after harvesting to call for reports to ascertain if there will be any shortage of labour in respect of cultivation?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: We do not think that there will be any shortage of labour at the time of cultivation. In the harvesting season there was some difficulty because the entire harvesting work had to be completed in the course of a month.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: With reference to answer (*a*) (*ii*), is the Government in a position to tell the House the approximate percentage of harvesting done so far?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: I have not got definite information, but as far as I know all harvesting has been completed by now.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell the House, with reference to answer (*g*) (*i*), the number of deaths among the labour population in Bengal as a result of starvation?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: I am not in a position to give it. But if fresh notice is given, we may try to find it out.

Mr. A. F. STARK: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to explain what he means by "'necessary steps' to meet any serious deficiency which may arise"? What steps does the Hon'ble Minister have in view?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: As I have already said, the Government of India were warned and the Military Department requested to help us with labour force, if necessary, if any serious deficiency arose in any district, due to shortage of labour, and there was apprehension of any crop not being harvested.

Mr. A. F. STARK: For cultivating the next crop?

(No answer.)

Stopping of settlement operation in Bakarganj.

***100. Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that—

(*i*) the settlement operation continuing in the district of Bakarganj was abruptly stopped in the year 1940; and

(*ii*) several hundreds of employees were thrown out of employment?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) (*ii*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) the number of employees affected; and

(*ii*) the number of those who have been provided by the Government up to date?

(*c*) Is it a fact that immediately after the close of Faridpur operation most of the employees of that Department will be discharged?

(*d*) If so, what steps do Government propose to take to provide these men?

MINISTER in charge of the REVENUE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Tarak Nath Mukerjea): (*a*) (*i*) Bakarganj Revisional Settlement was stopped in September, 1942.

(*ii*) Yes

(*b*) (*i*) 361.

(*ii*) 125

(*c*) Yes.

(*d*) The appointments held by these persons are purely temporary and in some cases only seasonal. Most of them are non-Matriculates and do not possess the qualifications required for clerical work in other Government departments. For those who are qualified an attempt will be made to find employment in other departments as far as possible, but no guarantee for such employment can be given.

Flood havoc in Burdwan district.

***101. Mr. ADWAITA KUMAR MAJI:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department be pleased to lay on the Table a statement showing—

(*i*) the total loss of—

(1) life, and

(2) property

in the district of Burdwan due to last flood havoc; and

(*ii*) the number of villages in each union affected?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps Government have taken to relieve the distress of the affected people?

(*c*) Do the Government contemplate to help the people of the affected area with gratuitous relief in the shape of—

(*i*) building huts, and

(*ii*) buying seeds?

(*d*) If so, when?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: (*a*)(*i*) (1) Below 20.

(2) Eighteen thousand and eight hundred huts were destroyed, of which the estimated value is over Rs.3½ lakhs. Besides there was loss of *aus* crops, *aman* seedlings and cattle, the value of which cannot be estimated without detailed enquiry and survey.

(*ii*) Sadar subdivision.—Two hundred and sixty-five villages in 19 unions.
Kalna subdivision.—Two hundred and thirteen villages in 24 unions.
Katwa subdivision. Seventy-seven villages in 16 unions.

(*b*) Relief was given by the (*i*) distribution of free doles in cash and kind, (*ii*) opening gruel kitchens and cheap grain shops, (*iii*) advance of agricultural loans, and (*iv*) opening test works.

(*c*) and (*d*) Rs.1,00,000 was sanctioned for distribution as gratuitous relief for rebuilding huts. Loans were also sanctioned for this purpose as well as for purchase of seeds.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: With reference to answers (*b*) and (*c*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what was the machinery used for the distribution of relief, particularly the distribution of free doles in cash and the distribution of gratuitous relief for rebuilding huts?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: It was done by Government officers with the help of members of the District Board.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: And with regard to opening of test relief works?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: It was done by the District Board through the District Engineer with the approval of the District Magistrate

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Is it a fact that large defalcations in the distribution of free doles and in the opening of test relief works were noticed and enquired into by Government?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I regret, I cannot make a statement on this matter, as the matter is still under investigation.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when was that investigation started?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: About two months ago.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how much of this money which was placed at the disposal of local officials for relief work actually reached the suffering people?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: It is humanly impossible to answer such a question, but I think it reached them entirely.

Mr. ADWAITA KUMAR MAJI: মাননীয় মন্ত্রী মহাশয় অনুগ্রহ করে বলবেন কি আউস ও আমন ধান সম্বন্ধে যে Enquiry এবং Survey করবার কথা ছিল তা করবেন কি না?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: সেই সম্বন্ধে তদন্ত করেই উত্তর দেওয়া হয়েছে।

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government think it necessary to make a detailed enquiry about the loss in the Burdwan district at that time?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: The matter is under enquiry and it has yet to be ascertained whether there was any loss whatsoever.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether practically six months have elapsed between the date of the havoc and today?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is no question.

Relief measures in the cyclone-affected areas of Midnapore.

***102. Mr. SIBNATH BANERJEE:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department be pleased to state with regard to the cyclone in the Midnapore district whether schemes and measures are under contemplation for—

(*i*) rehabilitation of devastated villages and towns;

(*ii*) granting of gratuitous help and loan for house-building purpose and basis thereof;

(*iii*) granting of gratuitous help for the purpose of buying agricultural implements, bullocks, seeds, manures, etc.;

(*iv*) granting of agricultural loans without any interest;

(*v*) exemption of all rents and revenues for the present year and thereafter realisation in the proportion to production of crops be made till normal crops are available; and

(*vi*) exemption of all arrear rents up to date?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state in brief the nature of such schemes and measures?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: (*a*) (*i*) to (*iii*) Steps have already been taken to give such relief.

(*iv*) Yes, but not without interest.

(*v*) and (*vi*) The question of remission of rent and revenue is being dealt with as provided in the Tauzi Manual.

(*b*) The following relief has been sanctioned since the cyclone of October, 1942:—

(*i*) Gratuitous Relief—Over Rs.2·32 crores.

(1) In cash.

(2) In foodstuff, cloths, blankets, etc.

(*ii*) Agricultural loans—About Rs.1·19 crores for the following purposes:—

(1) House-building.

(2) Maintenance.

(3) Purchase of milch and draught cattle.

(4) Purely agricultural purposes including advance of paddy seeds.

In deserving cases it is intended to convert loans for house-building into grants on more detailed enquiry.

(*iii*) Rehabilitation of small trades and business—About Rs.4 lakhs.

(*iv*) Loans to jotedars and talukdars—About Rs.5 lakhs.

(*v*) Test relief—Over Rs.71½ lakhs.

(*vi*) Milk canteens were started for distributing milk among infants, invalids and expectant mothers.

(*vii*) The restriction on the manufacture of salt by local people for export was relaxed and Government made arrangements for purchase of salt from the local producers.

(*viii*) Government sanctioned Rs.57,000 for distribution as gratuitous relief to destitute weavers for repairs or replacement of their looms and a further sum of Rs.98,600 for supplying them with yarn on loan.

(*ix*) Government have sanctioned the advance of the salaries of dafadars and chaukidars of the worst-affected areas pending final decision on the question of total or partial remission of union rates in those areas.

(*x*) Government sanctioned Rs.6,79,000 for assisting the educational institutions destroyed or severely damaged by the cyclone.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: With reference to answer (*x*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the sanctioned amount has been spent?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: The amount was paid and spent as soon as possible.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: With reference to answer (*ix*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the amounts sanctioned for payment of salaries of dafadars and chaukidars have also been actually spent?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I think it has already been spent otherwise there would have been complaints.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state with regard to the sanctioned amount of Rs. 57,000 for distribution as gratuitous relief to destitute weavers whether that amount has also been spent?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: It was spent long ago.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: With reference to answer (*x*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how many schools have been closed down since the cyclone?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: That I cannot say off-hand.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he has any idea that the facilities for education in those areas are the same now as it was before?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: In most cases the buildings have been restored; it may be that in a few cases that could not be done for the non-availability of suitable materials.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact or not that in spite of the help given there have been serious curtailment of educational facilities in those areas?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: It may be in a few cases due to various causes.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: With reference to answer (*a*) (*v*) and (*vi*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the question of remission of rent and revenue as provided in the Tauzi Manual has anything to do with a widespread devastation of such magnitude as had taken place in Burdwan?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: As I have already stated the matter is under investigation and I have nothing further to add.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: With reference to the answers (*v*) and (*vi*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state in how many cases revenue has been remitted?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: For such a detailed answer I want notice

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the total amount of remission?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: As accounts have not yet been finally settled, I am not in a position to say it—I want notice.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any remission of rent has been given to the tenants and, if so, to what extent?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: For the information of the House I may state that unless and until a landlord grants an entire remission of rent to his tenants, he is not eligible to get the remission of revenue from Government.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: With reference to the answer (*b*) (*vii*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us what was the nature of relaxation of the restriction on the manufacture of salt?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: It is a matter relating to another department. I have no further information.

Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: With reference to answer (*b*) saying that the following relief has been sanctioned since the cyclone of October, 1942, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how much has been actually spent up to date?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: The whole amount has been spent.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: On a point of order, Sir. The answer has been given that the restriction on the manufacture of salt by local people has been relaxed and Government has made arrangements for purchase of salt from the local producers and in answer to a supplementary question, the Hon'ble Minister has said that that is a matter relating to another department and he is not in a position to give any information.

Mr. SPEAKER: Any further information.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what was the nature of the relaxation?

Mr. SPEAKER: He is not expected to give you details.

Rise in the price of foodstuffs.

***103. Mr. HEM CHANDRA NASKAR:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Civil Supplies Department aware of the abnormal rise in the price of foodstuffs?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps are being taken by Government in the matter?

MINISTER in charge of the CIVIL SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy): The position on the 10th June, 1943, was as follows:—

(*a*) Yes.

(*b*) (1) Action is being taken against the hoarders and profiteers and instructions have issued to District Magistrates to requisition hoarded stocks or stocks which have not been declared or which have been falsely declared under the Foodgrains Control Order and to place them on the market for retail sale through controlled shops at Rs 15 per maund to the poorer people.

(2) Agriculturists who have more than their needs are being persuaded to part with their surplus stock for sale or to loan it out to their needy neighbours.

(3) Free trade has been established within the "Eastern Zone" giving an opportunity to the merchants of this Province to import rice from Bihar, Orissa and other Provinces and states within this zone.

(4) Government is also making purchases on a large scale from different Provinces with a view to meet the requirements of the deficit areas and to "moderate" prices in this Province.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the normal price of rice so far as consumers are concerned according to Government?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: At what period of time?

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Say today.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: I submit it does not arise out of this question.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: With reference to answer (*a*) (3) where reference has been made to the establishment of free zone in the Eastern

Area, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state now what has been the experience in regard to that experiment?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Our experience has been that in spite of opposition offered by the surrounding provinces, we have been able to get a substantial amount of food-grains into Bengal which, in my opinion, saved Bengal at a very critical stage. There is still considerable amount of food-grains within these provinces which have not yet moved into Bengal and we are in correspondence with these provinces regarding their release. I may state, Sir, that the position is by no means satisfactory.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is a fact that simultaneously with the introduction of free trade, the ceiling price control for rice and paddy in this province had to be lifted?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Yes

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is a fact that the withdrawal of the price control was one of the potent factors for forcing up prices in this province?

The Hon'ble Mr. H.S. SUHRAWARDY: No, Sir, I do not hold that view.

Supply of articles to security prisoners in Presidency Jail.

***104. Mr. SIB NATH BANERJEE:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department aware that—

(*i*) the security prisoners in the Presidency Jail are not getting the urgently necessary articles of everyday use such as clothing, warm clothing, bedding, chair, table, light, tooth paste, soap, oil, etc., for months though they are entitled to the same on admission;

(*ii*) ordinary articles as mugs for bathing are not supplied, even on repeated requisition for months;

(*iii*) letters from prisoners take 4-5 weeks to reach their friends and relatives in Calcutta and Howrah;

(*iv*) petitions and communications for Government are not sent out from the Jail office itself for 3-4 weeks; and

(*v*) Srijut Nishitha Nath Kundu, M.L.A., Srijut Panchanan Bose and other representatives of the security prisoners have in succession for the last four months repeatedly drawn in writing the attention of the Jail authorities towards the grievances of the security prisoners due to non-delivery of the articles to which they are entitled to on admission and their dissatisfaction in the matter?

(*b*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reasons therefor?

(*c*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that Srijut Satindra Nath Sen, another security prisoner, had sent a representation on the 17th January, 1943, that unless the grievances of the security prisoners are removed within seven days, he with some of his colleagues would start offering resistance for these grievances?

(*d*) If the answer to (*c*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to lay on the Table a copy of the representation?

(*e*) Is it a fact that the security prisoners themselves (including the questioner) personally represented their grievances to the Hon'ble Ministers in charge of Home, Co-ordination, of Civil Defence, Revenue, Finance and Co-operative Departments when they visited Jail on the 15th January, 1943, and on previous dates?

(*f*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps have been taken or are proposed to be taken for the redress of the grievances of the security prisoners in the Presidency Jail?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) (*i*) to (*iv*) and (*b*) I refer to the reply given to the starred question No. 103 on 5th March, 1943.

(*a*) (*v*) and (*c*) Yes.

(*d*) No.

(*e*) I have no information.

(*f*) The grievances, referred to, relate to the period of office of the last Ministry. Since the assumption of office by the present Ministry, all possible steps have been taken to enquire into the alleged grievances and to take mitigating action, where necessary.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: With reference to answer (*f*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state which of the grievances referred to in the question have been redressed?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: One of the chief grievances of security prisoners was with regard to the ownership of old clothing After the assumption of office by the present Ministry it has been recognised that these clothings belong to the prisoners and now can be sent either to charitable institutions or to their family members

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: About other grievances?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Another grievance was with regard to the delay of letters Now Government have appointed one Additional Jailor, two Deputy Jailors and four clerks Therefore, there is now no longer any delay in the transmisison of letters either from the security prisoners or to the security prisoners.

Another grievance was with regard to the crowding in jails and insufficiency of articles These grievances have also been redressed and now there is sufficient number of articles for the use of prisoners.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when this Additional Jailor and two Deputy Jailors referred to in reply were appointed?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: For the exact date I want notice.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Were they appointed after this Ministry assumed charge?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I am not sure about all of them but most of them were appointed after this Ministry came into office.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Was the Additional Jailor appointed after this Ministry came into office?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: What kind of enquiry was held and when and by whom?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The enquiry was held by the departmental officers of Government.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will it be possible for the Hon'ble Minister to state definitely who were the officers who held the enquiry and when?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: With reference to question (*a*) (*i*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell the House what arrangement has been made or what steps have been taken by Government to see that the security prisoners do get their urgently necessary articles of everyday use such as clothing, warm clothing, bedding, chair, table, light, tooth paste, soap, oil, etc.? The only answer we have got is that some arrangements are being made with regard to clothing No answer has been given with regard to table, chair, etc.

Mr. SPEAKER: I see that the question has been answered in another place by the Hon'ble Minister.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: One of the grievances was insufficiency of bathing mugs. It may be included in the "etcetera" put by the honourable member, and that has also been redressed and now there is a sufficient number of mugs

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Sir, the question is definite.

Mr. SPEAKER: You need not discuss whether it is definite or not

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: I have not got the answer.

Mr. SPEAKER: You may not be satisfied with the answer. What can I do?

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: What steps have been taken by the Government to supply the security prisoners with tables, chairs, warm clothing?

Mr. SPEAKER: He has given some answer. It may not be satisfactory to you. What can I do?

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that warm clothes have not been supplied to the security prisoners?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: As far as possible this has been done.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: No "as far as possible". Will the Hon'ble Minister be pelased to state definitely whether any warm clothes have been supplied to the security prisoners?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: At first there was some delay in the supply of warm clothing but this has been done now.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: With reference to reply (*d*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the reason for saying "No".

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: It is not in the public interest to lay the representation on the table.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir. We have been noticing of late attempts being made to reply to questions with reference to the present Ministry or the past Ministry and here in answer (*f*) the period of office of the last Ministry has been referred to. The rules require that when a question is put, there should be no insinuation. Am I to presume from that that when the answer is given, there should also be no insinuation? I must make it frankly clear that we do not belong to any party that has given support to any Ministry, but personally I feel (cries of "oh, oh" from the Coalition Benches)——

Mr. SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: My point of order is this: will you consider whether parliamentary practice permits the use of such mud-throwing and whether the rule regarding insinuation contained in the questions also applies in the case of answers?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please I am not called upon to give a ruling on a hypothetical set of facts. I do not see any insinuation here.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: With reference to answer (*c*), is the Government prepared to find out correct information?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: About what?

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Whether so many Hon'ble Ministers actually visited the jail and the prisoners did place their grievances before them. Sir, it is an important matter and the answer should be complete. Is the Government prepared to call for information on the point?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: There is reference to the visit of some Ministers during the regime of the last Ministry and there is a question whether security prisoners placed their grievances before the Ministers Government have no means of ascertaining from the Ministers concerned officially whether the grievances were represented or not. It is not up to the present Government to enquire from indivuals whether certain grievances were represented or not.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Is any record of visit kept in the jail register?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: At best there may be a record of their visit, but there cannot be any record of the fact whether grievances were represented or not and there cannot be any record of the conversation that took place between Ministers and the security prisoners.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Sir, I did not ask about the details of the conversation. Is there any record of the visit made by the Ministers mentioned in the question?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: In the question there is not only reference with regard to the visit, but it also enquires whether the security prisoners personally represented their grievances or not. The answer is

"there is no information". There may be information with regard to their visit to the jail, but there is no information whether the security prisoners personally represented their grievances to the then Ministers.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Did the Ministers actually visit the jail on the 15th January, 1943?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: If the honourable member will put a definite question to that effect, it will be answered.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Sir, my question is quite definite.

Mr. SPEAKER: Well, that is the answer It may not be satisfactory to you.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Have the papers of Government connected with the visit been destroyed?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: With reference to the answer just now given that some warm clothing has been supplied, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when was it supplied?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Medical treatment of security prisoner Srijut Lokendra Mohan Sen.

***105. Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department aware that—

(*i*) political prisoner Srijut Lokendra Mohan Sen, pleader (Dinajpur), who was in the Alipore Central Jail, was a diabetic patient;

(*ii*) on examination his urine and blood were found to contain large percentage of sugar;

(*iii*) he was operated on twice in the jail hospital; and

(*iv*) after the operation complications developed and he was removed in a precarious condition to the Medical College Hospital?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) why Srijut Lokendra Mohan Sen instead of initially being transferred to the Medical College Hospital for proper treatment was operated on in the Jail hospital; and

(*ii*) what steps, if any, the Hon'ble Minister propose to take in the matter?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) (*i*) to (*iii*) Yes.

(*iv*) No. He was removed to Medical College Hospital as due to his diabetic condition further spread of cellulitis was apprehended.

(*b*) (*i*) The prisoner was operated upon for an abscess on the palm of the right hand for which his operative treatment in the Medical College Hospital was not considered necessary.

(*ii*) As this prisoner has long been released no further action is necessary

Proposed appointment of tirbunal to enquire into alleged excesses committed by police in Tamluk and Contai.

*106. **Dr. GOBINDA CHANDRA BHOWMIK:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether the Government contemplate to appoint a tribunal of ex-Judges of Calcutta High Court to enquire into excesses committed by military and police in Tamluk and Contai subdivisions as promised by the ex-Chief Minister on the 15th February, 1943?

(*b*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when the tribunal is likely to be appointed?

MINISTER in charge of the HOME DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) and (*b*) I do not consider myself bound by any undertaking made in this respect by the late Ministry.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the present Home Minister considers it desirable to appoint a tribunal to enquire into the excesses?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, my policy is that we do not think it desirable to hold enquiries into actions that took place during the past regime.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Is the Hon'ble Home Minister aware that there have been excesses?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: As I was not in office at that time, I cannot express any opinion on that.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Is the Hon'ble Home Minister aware that facts have transpired during the present regime which demand an enquiry?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, many facts have transpired about the regime of the past Ministry.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he did not enquire into the excesses, because he was not bound by the undertaking given by the late Ministry?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, as I have said, it cannot be proper or right for a Government to try and rectify the mistakes of previous Governments.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Is it a fact that the present Ministry took over office on the distinct understanding given to persons of authority that they will not carry out the undertakings given by the previous Ministry in this respect?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, this is one of those statements which, I am afraid, can only be answered by the abuse of the rule of parliamentary language. (Cries of "Hear, hear" from the Coalition Party Benches.)

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government consider themselves bound by the undertaking

given by the previous Ministry and whether the alleged excesses committed in the district of Midnapore in their opinion really call for an enquiry or not?

Mr. SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Minister has already answered that question.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us if he has got in Government files any complaint about these excesses committed in Midnapore and Tamluk?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: If the honourable member will wait, there is another question pending and there he will find something about it.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister reply to my question without asking me to wait for the next question?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is another matter. Have you got any more supplementary question?

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Yes, Sir. Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any complaint about those excesses reached him when he had assumed office?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I am not aware of that at present.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(answers to which were laid on the table)

Special Board of Visitors for Buxa Special Reserve Jail.

40. Babu KHAGENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether any Special Board of Visitors has been appointed under section 46 of the Security Prisoners Rules, 1940, for the Buxa Special Reserve Jail?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) the date when the Board was appointed;

(*ii*) the names of the non-official visitors; and

(*iii*) the dates when the Board visited the Jail?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) (*i*) 20th December, 1943.

(*ii*) Mr. James T. Young, Maulvi Abdul Majid and Babu Dhirendra Kumar Bhowmik.

(*iii*) The Board has not yet met though members have been requested to visit the prisoners once a quarter and record their remarks in a special book kept in the custody of the Superintendent. A meeting of the Board is being convened shortly.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us why there has been so much delay in forming this Board?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: It is difficult to answer that question, but as soon as this Ministry came into office they took all steps to see that the Special Board was constituted under rule 46.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he formed the Board or some other local officer?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: It has to be appointed by the Government on the recommendation of the local officers.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it was due to the indifference of any particular officer that this Board was not formed earlier?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I have already explained that as soon as this Ministry came into office, steps were taken to constitute the Board. It is difficult to answer questions relating to what happened before this Ministry.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: My question has not been answered. My question was whether it was due to the indifference or fault of any particular officer who ought to have formed the Board that the Board was not formed or whether it was due to the indifference of the Minister concerned?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Government order was necessary to constitute the Board.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what was the reason for the fact that the present Ministry formed this Board after 8 months of their assumption of office?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: As soon as Government found that the Board had not been constituted, they took steps and it took some time naturally for the Board to be constituted as the opinion of the District Magistrate had to be invited.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what was the date on which the attention of the present Ministry was drawn to the fact that the Board was not constituted?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: With reference to answer (*b*) (*iii*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state although there is a provision to hold a meeting once a quarter, how is it that even after the belated formation of the Board on the 20th December, 1943, no business meeting has taken place up till now?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: My information is that a meeting was being convened, but I cannot say whether the meeting has already taken place or not.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: It is definitely stated in the answer that the Board has not yet met and still the Parliamentary Secretary——

Mr. SPEAKER: That might be after the question had been answered.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what are the considerations to select these particular gentlemen Mr. James T. Young, Maulvi Abdul Majid and Babu Dhirendra Kumar Bhowmik to form the Board leaving out all other members of the Legislature?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Government thought that they were the best men available for the purpose.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why Government did not take any member of the Opposition who might by this time have visited this jail?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I am not prepared to answer that question.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why has the Board been asked to visit the prisoners once a quarter and not more frequently?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That is the minimum which the members are requested to do.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether these members have a right to give a surprise visit to this Buxa Jail?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Yes, they can, but they must send some notice to the Superintendent.

Prayer for increased family allowance by certain security prisoners.

41. Mr. JNANENDRA CHANDRA MAJUMDAR: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether security prisoners Babus Jamini Mohan Pal, Nalini Mohan Das Gupta, Birendra Nath Bose, Nani Bhattacharya, Birendra Nath Sarkar, Tarakeswar Bhattacharya, Susil Chandra Ghosh and Anath Nath Datta, all at present lodged in the Dacca Central Jail, have applied to the Government for increment of their family allowances, granted by the Government?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether their family allowances were sanctioned from the dates of their arrests; and

(*ii*) whether Babu Jamini Mohan Pal's son and daughter have been compelled to suspend their studies in schools?

(*c*) If the answer to (*b*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason therefor?

(*d*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) when the security prisoners Babus Nalini Mohan Das Gupta, Birendra Nath Bose and Susil Chandra Ghosh sent their first petitions for increment of allowance; and

(*ii*) whether they have come to any decision in the matter?

(*e*) If the answer to (*d*) (*ii*) is in the negative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason therefor?

(*f*) Is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of—

(*i*) increasing the amounts of their family allowances; and

(*ii*) sanctioning their family allowances with effect from the dates of their arrests?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) (*i*) No, except in the case of Babu Nani Gopal Bhattacharya.

(*ii*) I have no information except from prisoner's own petition.

(*c*) Does not arise.

(*d*) (*i*) On 7th March, 1942; the 23rd July, 1942; and the 3rd June, 1942, respectively.

(*ii*) Family allowance of Babu Nalini Mohan Das Gupta and Babu Susil Chandra Ghosh have been increased from Rs.10 to Rs.25 per month, with effect from the 1st April, 1942, and to Rs.38 per month from the 1st April, 1943, and that of Babu Birendra Nath Bose has been increased from Rs.20 to Rs.30 per month from the 1st July, 1942, and to Rs.45 per month from the 1st April, 1943.

(*e*) Does not arise.

(*f*) (*i*) Increments have been sanctioned in all cases.

(*ii*) This is done in nearly all cases, but I am not prepared to lay down a specific rule.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell the House why except in the case of Babu Nani Gopal Bhattacharya family allowances were not sanctioned from the date of the arrest to the security prisoners mentioned in the question?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Because when the family allowances should have been granted they were not granted. Of course there is no hard and fast rule. Generally Government sanction allowances from the beginning of the financial year.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: With reference to answer (*b*) (*ii*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell the House whether they changed their mind to make an enquiry into the allegation that Babu Jamini Mohan Pal's son and daughter had been compelled to suspend their studies in school on account of pecuniary difficulties?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Government have no information except what has been stated in the prisoner's petition.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell the House whether any enquiry was made on the point?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: It was not necessary. Government had full information regarding Babu Jamini Mohan Pal.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whose order is final in the matter of granting family allowances? Is it the Hon'ble Home Minister's or——

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: With reference to the last answer given by the Parliamentary Secretary, will he be pleased to tell the House whether Government have got full information about Babu Jamini Mohan Pal's affairs?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: So far as Babu Jamini Mohan Pal is concerned, Government had full information and Government were satisfied that the only loss to the family was Rs. 15 per mensem which was occasioned by the closing down of the printing press which belonged to him. There was no other loss.

Incendiarism in Contai and Tamluk subdivisions.

42. Mr. ISWAR CHANDRA MAL: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that many houses (*kutcha* and *pucca*) of the inhabitants of the subdivisions of Contai and Tamluk, district Midnapore, have been burnt with all the household articles in the months of August, September, October, November and December, 1942?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state who was or were responsible for such incendiarism?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to lay on the Table a statement showing the number of houses burnt in the—

(*i*) Contai subdivision, and

(*ii*) Tamluk subdivision,

before and after the cyclone?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: (*a*) Yes. But I am not in a position to state what, if any, buildings were completely demolished, or in what, if any cases, all the household articles were destroyed.

(*b*) Congressmen and other villagers, and Government forces.

(*c*) A statement is laid on the Table.

Statement referred to in reply to clause (c) of unstarred question No. 42.

	Before cyclone.	After cyclone
Tamluk subdivision		
Number of thanas, offices, houses, etc., belonging to Government, public bodies and private persons burnt by Congress	34	9
Number of Congress camps and houses burnt by Government forces	12	19
Number of Congress camps and houses burnt by villagers	..	1
Contai subdivision		
Number of thanas, offices, houses, etc., belonging to Government, public bodies and private persons burnt by Congress	36	2
Number of Congress camps and houses burnt by Government forces	162	..
Number of Congress camps and houses burnt by villagers	.	2

Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: May I ask the Hon'ble Minister after the reply given in the schedule what is his authority for saying that houses were burnt by Congress?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: That is the report of the local officers. These occurrences, I may remind the honourable members, took place at a time when we were not in office. The reports are there and they are my authority.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: With reference to the answer that Congress houses were burnt, what was the material to connect houses of individuals with Congress and what is meant by Congress houses and Congress camps?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I find from the record that it refers to the offices established temporarily by the Congress Committees in those houses.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the number of Congress camps and what is the number of what they choose to call Congress houses out of 162?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I ask for notice.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when were these facts ascertained?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I cannot state actually when. I ask for notice.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether in view of the widespread incendiarism committed by Government forces Government is prepared to enquire into the matter?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, I would again make my position clear. I feel that it was the duty of the Government then in power to deal with these questions which occurred at that time. A Government that comes into office after an interval of 18 months cannot go and look into them. It is the duty of the Government then in existence. If that Government did not do its duty, well, that Government was responsible and if the people approved of it and tolerated it, they could not have any grievance. If the members of the House did not approve of that Government and turned it out, that Government had been punished for not doing its duty. The Government that follows cannot be held responsible.

Mr. DEBENDRA LALL KHAN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to let the House know whether the last Government gave an undertaking to enquire into these excesses?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: It is quite possible that they might have given.

Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: As regards the burning of houses, may I ask the Hon'ble Minister: was this burning done by any order of the court of law?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I do not know. I am not aware of that.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: With reference to burning of houses by Government forces, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if those houses were burnt as a punitive measure exercised by them following the principle of "tooth for tooth and eye for eye"?

Mr. SPEAKER: Why say "tooth for tooth and eye for eye". The words "punitive measure" are all right.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if those houses were burnt by Government forces in a spirit of reprisal?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: That is a matter of opinion.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what was the object in burning houses even of Congressmen and Congress offices by Government forces?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: As far as I can find out, it appears that action in each case was taken in restoring law and order.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if any enquiry was made to ascertain whether in each case, as has

been mentioned by him, the steps taken were by way of maintenance of law and order only?

Mr. SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, I think you have heard his reply that no enquiry was made in each case, and again you are referring to the same question.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, he replied that it was done to maintain law and order. I put the question whether any enquiry was made to ascertain if this incendiarism and arson was made by Government really with a view to maintain law and order?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I have given whatever information I have in my possession on this subject. I have got nothing further to add.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether in view of these cases of incendiarism committed by Government forces on record the present Ministry is prepared to stand by the undertaking given by the last Ministry for the appointment of a Tribunal?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I have already expressed my views on the subject.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any action was taken against those persons who burnt the Congress buildings and, if not, why no action was taken against them by the Government?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I think he should have asked the then Minister in charge for the reply to this question.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state under what law the houses of the Congressmen were burnt?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I am afraid, I cannot give an interpretation of law in this House.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state on whose authority these 162 Congress houses and camps were burnt?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I have no information.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if the aggrieved people of Midnapore have even at this stage made any representation to the present Government whether Government will consider the desirability of holding an enquiry into the matter?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is a hypothetical question.

Mr. DEBENDRA LALL KHAN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if repression is still continuing in Midnapore?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: As a matter of fact my report from Tamluk area is rather bad. There have been cases of kidnapping and cases of fines. Recently in a case a fine of Rs. 500 was realised from one of the persons there by persons unknown. I have also received a representation that certain oppressions were committed by the Police. I

have called for a report and I propose to take action if it is found that there is truth in it. On the other hand, I would like to take this opportunity of bringing to the notice of the honourable members of this House that parts of Tamluk area are still very bad and there is every reason to believe that persons who are being kidnapped there belonging both to the Hindu and Muslim communities—persons who have supported the forces of Government—are being murdered.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if the present Government is considering the desirability of rehabilitating the destitute persons who have been thrown out of their homes and belongings as a result of incendiarism and arson committed by Government forces?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: We have got no other policy of rehabilitation apart from the policy adopted by the Revenue Department as relief measures.

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Supply of standard cloth.

*91. **Rai Bahadur JOGESH CHANDRA SEN:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Civil Supplies Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) what arrangements have been made to supply standard cloth to the public;

(*ii*) how the same is being distributed in Calcutta; and

(*iii*) how many shops or firms have been permitted to sell standard cloth in Calcutta?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the names and addresses of the firms who have been so permitted?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any arrangements have been made to supply standard cloths in the mufassil?

(*d*) If so, what are those?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: (*a*) (*i*) and (*ii*) Standard cloth is being distributed in Calcutta through selected dealers under the supervision of officer of the department and non-official helpers.

(*iii*) Twenty-seven.

(*b*) A list is laid on the Library Table.

(*c*) Yes.

(*d*) District Officers have been asked to arrange distribution through local bodies such as union boards, selected co-operative societies, big employers, reputable charitable and philanthropic organisations and reliable dealers.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether in supplying these standard cloths to selected dealers and big employers Government have also issued some directions to be followed by them in selling those standard cloths to the public who will approach them?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Yes, certain directions have been issued.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: What are those directions?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: If the honourable member will give me notice I shall lay the directions on the Library Table.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if anybody who will go there will get the standard cloth from such dealers?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: If he takes with him the enumeration card.

Appointment of supervisors for price control at Bogra.

*92. **Mr. WALIUR RAHMAN:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Civil Supplies Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether the price control authorities at Bogra have appointed supervisors for price control;

(*ii*) whether the appointments have been made with the sanction of the Government;

(*iii*) the terms and conditions of such appointments with their duties; and

(*iv*) whether the supervisors are passing orders for the distribution of essential commodities as laid down by the Director of Civil Supplies?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*)(*iv*) is in the negative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what action he proposes to take in the matter?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: The position on the 30th June, 1943, was as follows:—

(*a*) (*i*) Supervisors have been appointed by the Price Control Committee with the approval of the District Magistrate in connection with the price control work.

(*ii*) No.

(*iii*) The supervisors are respectable local gentlemen and honorary workers. Their duties are:—

(1) To keep watch against unauthorised sales and profiteering beyond the controlled rates.

(2) To take stock reports of essential commodities (except rice and paddy) with the wholesale dealers.

(3) To assist the District Supply Officer in drawing up schemes of distribution to the retail dealers in respect of sugar and kerosine.

(*iv*) No. It is done by the District Supply Officer with the approval of the District Magistrate.

(*b*) No action is called for.

(The House was adjourned for fifteen minutes.)

(After adjournment.)

BUDGET ESTIMATES, 1944-45.

Statement by the Hon'ble the Finance Minister.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Mr. Speaker, I rise to present the Budget for the year 1944-45.

The scheme underlying previous budget speeches in this Province has been a comparison, firstly, of the revised estimates of the closing year with the estimates presented twelve months earlier and, secondly, of the budget estimates of the coming year with the revised estimates of the closing year. This was a form of presentation admirably suited to the days when the variation between one year's revenue and expenditure was not likely to exceed a crore at the very most and the principal concern of this House was to see that such new revenue as was available was applied to nation-building departments. In the changed circumstances of today when the expenditure under the three heads "63—Extraordinary Charges in India," "54—Famine" and "40—Agriculture" will account for nearly half the total expenditure of the year and is approximately equal to the whole expenditure of the Province during 1940-41, I doubt if that form of presentation is the most appropriate and I think I may be able to help Hon'ble members to a truer appreciation of the present state of our finances and the resulting problems if I explain our estimates of the two years' working in broad outline and leave those who wish to fill in the details to study the Red Book where they will find the usual detailed comparisons under each grant and the explanations of the main differences.

I do not propose this afternoon to add yet one more to the many diagnoses of the causes of the famine that ravaged Bengal last year, but no event in recent years has so stirred the public conscience and it is no hyperbole to say that the history of the Province during the two years with which we are concerned today is the tale of that famine and the measures taken to combat it, to deal with its aftermath and to prevent a recurrence: and for those with eyes to see beyond the figures, that tale is told in the estimates under the three heads "63—Extraordinary Charges in India", "54—Famine" and "40—Agriculture".

Let me start with "63—Extraordinary Charges in India". This head of account was first opened in 1939-40 to record extraordinary expenditure necessitated by war conditions and for the first three years the bulk of the expenditure debited thereunder was connected with Civil Defence. The expenditure on Civil Defence finally debitable to provincial revenues during 1943-44 and 1944-45 will be one crore and one crore 30 lakhs respectively and this burden which, coupled with the shrinkage in our receipts from the Jute Export Duty and a dearness allowance of moderate proportions, we fondly thought in the first years of the current decade was to be the extent of the war's impact on the finances of the province, looks very small alongside the staggering burdens imposed by the famine. The cost of the Civil Supplies Department which in 1942-43 was under 4 lakhs will be one crore and one crore forty-eight lakhs in 1943-44 and 1944-45, respectively. These figures do not of course include the losses on the Department's trading operations which have been placed at 3½ and 5 crores, respectively. I must explain what these latter figures represent.

The procurement operations of the Civil Supplies Department aim at obtaining physical possession of sufficient stocks to enable Government to ensure the equitable distribution of the available food supplies at reasonable price levels. These operations involve the purchase of stocks at prices in

excess of those which it is ultimately hoped to stabilise and in consequence, if Government's operations achieve their purpose, a loss is inevitable. In fact to a great extent Government's loss will be the measure of the success of their operations. Government appreciate of course that the deliberate depreciation of the value of their stocks will not be the only kind of loss for which allowance will have to be made, but it will not be possible to calculate the final result of these operations until the last stocks are disposed of and the accounts closed and the losses for which provision has been made in the estimates are the losses entailed in the sale of stocks below the price at which they were purchased or in the deliberate depreciation of the value of Government's stocks. This provision is not expected to cover the further losses with which we shall undoubtedly be faced one day—shortages, damaged stocks, unsaleable stocks. The writing off of such losses will have to await the final winding up of these newly assumed activities, but as it is part of Government's policy to accumulate and hold large stocks as a provincial reserve and at the same time to use their statutory powers to make periodical reductions in the value of the stocks in their hands, it would obviously be unsound not to make provision in our estimates to meet the inevitable loss. Nor need the tax-payer look askance at a loss of 5 crores: for if Government's operations do no more than ensure that the price of rice does not rise above the price now prevailing, as compared with last year's expenditure, in countless individual domestic budgets there will be savings that would aggregate ten, perhaps twenty, times the outlay by virtue of which such savings will have been made possible.

In normal times the expenditure adjusted under the head "54—Famine" represents either expenditure on Test Works or the cost of doles to persons for whom test work is not possible or at times when test works are impracticable In some years extra staff has to be appointed to administer and supervise the distribution of relief and in those years a further item of expenditure—Establishment—will appear in the accounts under this head. But in the year now closing it has been necessary not only to open relief centres, poor houses and orphanages throughout the Province but also to organise special medical relief at a cost approximately equal to the normal annual expenditure under "38—Medical"; in consequence the estimates both for the current and the coming year under "54—Famine" include large provisions for special medical relief and poor- or work-houses and orphanages.

In September last when presenting the Budget for the current year I estimated that the cost of relief operations would amount to no less than 3½ crores. High as that estimate seemed at the time, it has fallen far short of our requirements. Our revised estimate has been placed at 5 crores 65 lakhs. Money, however, has been only a part of our problem: the initial difficulty was of course the procurement of the foodgrains, but the problem of getting the supplies to the areas where they were most needed often presented almost equal difficulties. By October last it had become clear that these twin problems of procurement and distribution were far beyond the unaided resources of the Provincial Government. It was not, however, till His Excellency Lord Wavell assumed his high office and within a few days of assuming office visited Bengal and saw things for himself that assistance commensurate with the needs of the situation was vouchsafed. The people

of this Province will ever remember the deep sympathy and understanding that prompted His Excellency's visit. They will recall too with gratitude His Excellency's decision to put the Army on the job. If I may be permitted to say so, that decision was an outstanding decision—realistic and statesmanlike. That decision marked the turning point in our troubles. From that day the famine fighting organisation assumed proportions more commensurate with the task. I do not propose this afternoon to attempt to recount all that the Army has done or how it solved our distribution problem. The story is well known and the services then rendered will be remembered with heartfelt gratitude in the remotest corners of the Province. The assistance given by the Army brought about an immediate improvement in the famine situation and when epidemics—the inevitable aftermath of famine—made their appearance, the Army again came to the rescue.

A score of hospitals with from 100 to 150 beds in each were opened in the worst affected districts and in these hospitals, equipped with the most modern devices for the treatment of war casualties in the field, thousands of sick destitutes learned for the first time what real medical attention means. In addition, some 40 mobile treatment centres have gone into the interior of the districts, giving cholera inoculation and small-pox vaccination and treating malaria and other cases: the number of cases so treated runs into six figures.

To return to the estimates: out of the total grant of 5 crores 65 lakhs, 3½ crores is chargeable to gratuitous relief and 1¼ crores to test works.

Gratuitous relief has been administered chiefly in the form of grain doles and of cooked food from free kitchens run in some cases by official agencies and in others by non-official organisations assisted by Government with supplies of foodgrains at subsidised rates. With a view to minimise the evil of inflation doles in cash were given as sparingly as possible.

The expenditure adjustable under Gratuitous Relief will also include an outlay of 40 lakhs for the purchase of cloth and blankets for free distribution among the destitutes and a sum of 5 lakhs for the purchase of imported milk foods for distribution to infants and nursing mothers.

The estimated expenditure on test relief works, as already mentioned, is a crore and a quarter. The test works were in most cases designed to improve communications, drainage and irrigation facilities so that in addition to providing work for labourers they might help materially in the "Grow More Food" campaign.

The provision included in the estimates for poor houses and orphanages is 33 lakhs. District Officers have been authorised to set up temporary poor houses, orphanages and evacuation camps wherever necessary with proper arrangements for food, sanitation and water-supply. In accordance with these instructions about one hundred poor houses and destitute camps have been opened in different parts of the Province.

The estimates also include a provision of 53 lakhs for the administration of special medical relief in rural areas. This provision is intended to meet the cost of some 60 emergency hospitals of a hundred beds each and 500 hospitals of 20 beds each attached to selected dispensaries in the worst affected areas. In addition to this huge expansion of the existing facilities for indoor treatment—an expansion representing a 200 per cent. increase

on the number of beds normally available—arrangements have been made to provide outdoor treatment nearer the patient's home by the opening of some 2,800 satellite treatment centres based on existing dispensaries. A further measure designed for the same purpose is the organisation of 250 mobile medical units to tour in the interior and give malaria and general treatment.

Against 5 crores 65 lakhs in the current year, our estimate of famine relief expenditure in 1944-45 stands at 2 crores 61 lakhs. We are hoping that with sustained improvement in the economic situation it will be possible to effect considerable reduction in expenditure on test works and gratuitous relief. The Budget accordingly provides for half a crore under test works and a crore under gratuitous relief. Special medical relief operations will, however, have to be continued for a good part of the coming year and the estimate on this account has been placed at 62 lakhs. The position in regard to orphanages is as follows. Temporary orphanages will have to be kept open for the maintenance of orphan and deserted children while a search is being made for friends and relatives who will be able and willing to take care of them. Orphans without friends and relatives will have to be transferred to approved non-official institutions or to quasi-permanent orphanages which will be set up and equipped for the purpose by Government. The first of these has already been opened at Berhampore The Budget contains a provision of 32 lakhs for temporary work- or poor-houses and of 15 lakhs for quasi-permanent orphanages.

It will be seen that the total provision on account of famine relief in the two years is eight crores and a quarter. No separate provision is included in these estimates for the rehabilitation of people who have been ruined as a result of the famine. This matter is engaging the attention of Government and it is certain that large sums will be required for this purpose.

The foodgrains procurement and distribution arrangements represent the first leg of Government's plan to prevent a recurrence of famine conditions. The second leg is the Grow More Food campaign.

During 1944-45 every attempt will be made to bring under cultivation more cultivable waste lands but the main aim of the campaign will be to increase the output of lands already cultivated. The methods by which it is hoped to achieve this aim are the distribution of manure and improved seeds: the encouragement of the making of composts in villages and the carrying out of such irrigation and drainage projects as promise quick results.

The approved schemes of seed distribution include *aus* and *aman* paddy seeds, *rabi* seeds, fodder crop seeds and such famine crops as *cheena*, *kaun*, *kalai* and barley. To facilitate the working of the various seed distribution schemes a seed store or depot is being established at each subdivisional headquarters. During the coming year it is proposed to introduce, as an alternative to the *sowai* system ordinarily followed in this Province, a system of cash sale with a 20 per cent. rebate. This is reported to be the normal practice in a number of other Provinces and it is hoped that it will prove attractive in this Province also. It is not intended to discontinue distribution on the *sowai* basis: the cultivator will have the option of obtaining his seeds

on payment of 80 per cent. of the prescribed cost or on loan, such loan being repayable after the harvest on the *sowai* system in cash or in kind.

The grant under "40—Agriculture" includes a special provision for the Grow More Food campaign of 1 crore 35 lakhs and 50 lakhs in 1943-44 and 1944-45 respectively. The reason why the provision for the coming year is so much smaller than that for the current year is that the seeds for several of next year's schemes will be purchased during the current year.

The revised estimate for the current year under "Jails" has been placed at 1 crore 36 lakhs against an actual expenditure of 53 lakhs only in 1942-43. This increase of over 150 per cent. is the direct result of famine conditions: it is true that there has been a large increase in the prison population, but that itself is to a large extent the result of desperation on the part of those who found themselves driven nearer and nearer the verge of starvation.

The bulk of the increase is of course due to the greatly increased cost of foodstuffs. The normal practice is for each jail to purchase in the closing months of each year when the new crops come on to the market a stock of foodgrains sufficient for the whole of the following year. Owing to lack of supplies it was not possible to make purchases on the usual scale during the closing months of 1942-43 and supplementary supplies had to be purchased during the current year at very high prices. There have also been substantial increases in the prices of clothing, medicine and other necessities.

Next year's budget for "Jails" has been placed at 1 crore 11 lakhs on the assumption that the prices of foodstuffs will be lower. In the two years together the expenditure under this head will be a crore and a half above the expenditure of the two preceding years.

The grants under Irrigation for the two years include a provision of 109 lakhs for the repair of the Damodar Embankment breached by last year's floods. The Government of India have agreed to make an interest-free advance for this purpose, the question whether this advance or any part of it shall be repaid being left for settlement along with the general question of financial assistance to the Province in its present difficulties.

The grant under "Industries" includes one novel provision of which I must make mention. I refer to the provision of Rs.16 lakhs for payment of subsidies to sugar mills in Bengal. Government are satisfied that the price of sugar fixed by the Sugar Controller—this price is uniform throughout India—will not allow sugar mills in Bengal to pay more than 12 annas a maund for cane. Government are of opinion that in Bengal today 12 annas a maund does not represent an adequate return to the cultivator of cane and apprehend that unless he gets a minimum price of Re.1, the cultivator will not have sufficient inducement to maintain an equal area under cane and sugar production will be adversely affected. At the present time it is of paramount importance to ensure the maximum possible production of sugar. Government have therefore prescribed a minimum price of Re.1 per maund for purchases of cane by mills and have undertaken to compensate mills at the rate of 4 annas a maund. No subsidy will be paid to mills in respect of cane grown on their own plantations.

The revised estimate for the current year under "Public Health" has been placed at 82 lakhs against 36 lakhs in 1942-43. The increase is due mainly

to anti-epidemic measures and includes 12½ lakhs for free distribution of quinine, 14 lakhs for the control of cholera and small-pox and 13½ lakhs for the repair and re-sinking of tube-wells which have gone out of order in the affected areas. The requirements for the coming year have been placed at 61 lakhs. The decrease is due to the fact that while measures for combating malaria, cholera and small-pox will have to be continued for some months, the special provision for the restoration of tube-wells will not be required next year.

In the two years the increase in Public Health expenditure over the normal of 36 lakhs amounts to three-quarters of a crore.

One last item which calls for individual mention is a provision of 5 lakhs for payment to the Scheduled Castes Education Fund in the Budget for the coming year. The Fund was created in 1938-39 with an initial contribution of 5 lakhs. A lakh and a half was put into the Fund in each of the years 1941-42 to 1943-44. It is proposed to make a payment of 5 lakhs into the Fund during 1944-45.

Let me now review briefly the working of the capital head "85-A". As the House is aware, this head was opened in the current year for the exhibition of large-scale trading transactions undertaken by Government to promote healthier marketing conditions in respect of certain commodities, principally foodgrains.

The schemes for which provision has been included under this head are:—

(1) purchase of foodgrains other than wheat;
(2) purchase of wheat and wheat products;
(3) supply of foodstuffs at concession rate to Government employees including Civic Guards and A.R.P. personnel; and
(4) purchase of standard cloth, sugar and salt.

The total capital outlay involved in these schemes in the current year is of the order of 76 crores, of which 41 crores is derived from sale-proceeds and represents the turnover of stocks. As I have already explained, the loss involved in these transactions during the current year by the sale of foodgrains other than wheat to the public at less than cost price or by the deliberate depreciation of stocks has been placed at 3½ crores. No loss is anticipated in respect of transactions relating to the purchase of wheat and wheat products, standard cloth, sugar and salt. The book value of the stock likely to remain in hand at the close of the year is estimated at 29¾ crores.

The comparable figures for the coming year are—a total outlay of 81 crores—a loss of 5 crores and a carry forward of 12 crores of foodgrains other than wheat and some 56 lakhs of salt.

Hon'ble members will naturally wish to know from what sources capital of this order has been obtained. I shall have more to say on this subject later: at this stage it will be sufficient to say that this huge capital has been obtained from three sources: loans from the Central Government, cash credit advances from the Imperial Bank of India and treasury bills.

I now turn to the receipt side. Our revenue for the years 1943-44 and 1944-45 has been placed at 21 crores 34 lakhs and 21 crores 97 lakhs respectively. These figures represent increases over the receipts of 1942-43, our previous best year, of 4 crores 88 lakhs and 5 crores 51 lakhs respectively.

The heads under which the main increases occur are "Excise," "Other Taxes and Duties," and "Stamps." Under "Excise" we look for increases of 1 crore 12 lakhs and 1 crore 33 lakhs respectively; an increase of 90 odd lakhs under "Other Taxes and Duties;" and a comparable increase under "Stamps." Six months ago, while presenting the Budget for the current year I predicted that our policy of enhancing the Excise duty would achieve the double object of increased revenue and diminished consumption. I have now before me a graphical chart vividly showing the results of our policy. There has been little or no increase in the consumption of excisable articles: in fact there has been a considerable decrease in the consumption of country spirits from which half our Excise revenue is derived. The very large increase in our Excise receipts is the result of the recent steep but judicious up-grading of the rates of duty.

Point of order.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Why rise on a point of order now?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes, Sir, I have to rise at this stage. There is a reference made to the presence of a graphical chart before the Hon'ble Minister. It has not been supplied to us yet.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: This is frivolous.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The Chairman is there. There is no right even for a spirituous member to use any abusive language to anybody else. I can use stronger expressions——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The chart must be made available to members; otherwise there should be no reference to it.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I shall see to that. Dr. Sanyal, please resume your seat.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: This was frivolous and I take no notice of it.

Statement by the Hon'ble the Finance Minister.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Since May last we have gradually raised the rates of duty on almost all excisable articles. In the case of country spirit the raising of the rates of duty has resulted in an increase in the incidence of taxation of over 150 per cent., the incidence per London Proof gallon rising from Rs. 10·5 in 1942-43 to Rs. 26·9.

During the period May to December 1943 although the consumption of country spirit was only 5·8 lakhs of gallons against 7·9 lakhs of gallons during the corresponding period of the previous year, there was an increase of over 60 per cent. in revenue-receipts for the period rising from 78 to 128 lakhs. This is the graph I referred to.

The enhancement of the rates of tax chargeable under the Amusements Tax Act, including the Betting and Totalisator taxes, and the Bengal Electricity Duty Act accounts for half the increase under "Other Taxes and

Duties", the balance coming from increased receipts under the sales tax and the raw jute sales tax.

Sir, I wish to emphasize that our estimates for 1944-45 have not taken into account either the new revenue I hope to get from the agricultural income-tax or the additional revenue from the proposed enhancement of the sales tax: we have been informed that our receipts from the income-tax pool next year are likely to be 80 lakhs higher than in the current year and it is this expectation that accounts for the increase in revenue for which I have budgeted next year.

Let me now summarise the results of the two years' working on revenue account. The revenue has been placed at 21 crores 34 lakhs and 21 crores 97 lakhs respectively: against these figures the expenditure is put at 32 crores 54 lakhs and 30 crores 43 lakhs respectively, so that we face a deficit of 11 crores 20 lakhs this year and a further deficit of 8 crores 46 lakhs next year. Sir, since this statement was sent to the Press for printing I have received intimation from the Government of India that our share of the income-tax receipts is likely to be Rs. 1,10,00,000 more than what was expected in the Budget when it was framed This addition will reduce our Budget deficits from Rs. 8,46,00,000 to Rs. 7,36,00,000 in 1944-45.

I shall now endeavour to give Hon'ble members a brief summary of the means by which we have secured the funds to meet the outgoings so greatly in excess of our revenue receipts.

In the early months of the year we relied mainly on the Central Government for the necessary accommodation and between June and October last we received loans and advances totalling 12 crores. Later, however, the Government of India indicated that they desired the Provincial Government to make their own arrangements to raise funds in the open market or through normal trade channels. In compliance with the wishes of the Central Government, arrangements were made with the Imperial Bank for the opening of cash credit accounts for the financing of the various trading operations recorded in our accounts under the Capital head "85-A" and the balance of our requirements has been found by the issue of treasury bills. For the *aus* procurement scheme we arranged a cash credit account with a limit of 8 crores repayable not later than 31st December 1943. The total amount drawn against this account was only 2 crores 21 lakhs. The account was repaid in full on 31st December, 1943 For the *aman* procurement scheme and other cognate schemes we have arranged a cash credit account with a limit of 25 crores repayable not later than 31st December, 1944

The details of our issue of treasury bills will be found in the second of the three statements in the Appendix to the printed copy of my statement, which will be supplied to honourable members. We shall carry forward bills to the extent of 15½ crores into the coming year.

In the same Appendix Hon'ble members will find a statement summarising our indebtedness on the 31st March 1944 and 31st March 1945

respectively. In this statement, as in the estimates, I have assumed th: the cash credit account with the Imperial Bank for 1944 will have been pai off in full and a new account on similar terms opened for 1945. Two (the figures in this statement will of course depend upon the progress of ou procurement operations: I refer to the amounts shown against Imperia *Bank cash credit account. If progress is slow and our drawings on thi account are smaller than estimated, there will be a corresponding reductioı* in the stock figures but there will be no change in the net indebtedness.

According to my estimates the coming year's working will close with a negative balance of 10 crores 65 lakhs. This of course is an unworkable proposition and it is obvious that funds must be found to carry on the administration. Let me explain why I have adopted the unprecedented course of presenting a budget in which no steps have been taken to make good the expected depletion of our balance and the closing balance for 1944-45 is shown unashamedly as a minus figure.

In November last the Government of Bengal addressed the Government of India and asked for a subvention: so far no reply has been received from the Government of India, but I am hopeful that assistance will be forthcoming. In September last when presenting the estimates for the current year I said, "Bengal, once so richly dowered with Nature's bounties, is today bent double with woe and agony and is a suppliant for neighbourly charity", but in seeking financial assistance from the Centre in our present difficulties I do not consider that it is charity we are asking for The financial settlement that governs the allocation of revenue between the Centre and the Provinces was designed for normal times and in the circumstances of today it would be as inequitable as it would be impracticable to suggest that Bengal must work out its own salvation within the limits of the Niemeyer Award I have come to believe in the motto: "Heaven helps those that help themselves" and when I tell the House that during the course of the two years with which the estimates now in the hands of honourable members are concerned, apart altogether from our larger receipts from income-tax, I hope to raise 10 crores more revenue than was raised in the two preceding years, it will, I trust, be agreed that we have bestirred ourselves to good purpose.

On the other hand I do not wish to convey the impression that we have exhausted our own resources or that I shall not be called upon to make further demands on the tax-payer before the end of the year. This is not a threat; nor is it evil foreboding. The day of the presentation of the Budget is a day on which we must look back and look forward. The future is not a natural and unguided continuation of the past; and in looking forward to the building up of a better world for ourselves and for our children we must be fortified by the spirit of the celebrated dictum, that taxation is "an engine of social and national policy". A compulsory abatement of our personal incomes or our power to purchase our individual enjoyments according to our individual choice is a small price to pay not merely for the moral satisfaction of having contributed to the betterment of our neighbours and our surroundings, but also for the very material advantages of improved sanitation and increased security, enlightenment and prosperity

of the people. The ever-expanding social functions of the State call for greater elasticity of revenue. If, to a certain extent and in the last resort, the State is Force, a truer conception of organised human society is that the State is Service. And to this end we will, whenever necessary, tax *ourselves*.

Last September I ventured in this House to explain in my humble way the problem of inflation and the economic phenomena for which it is responsible. In view of much loose talk on the subject and especially in view of its impact on the food situation here, I felt that it was my duty to inform the Legislature that, within the limited powers of the Provincial Government, we were in our measures of relief and taxation alive to the problem of inflation and to the necessity of counteracting its effects in Bengal. It is a problem which will be our constant companion during the War and for some time after the cessation of hostilities; and I hope I shall have the guidance and support of the Legislature and the public in my efforts to harness redundant currency to the service of the community.

As if to show that there is an element of good in things evil, it appeared that during the worst stages of the famine it was this circulation of excess purchasing power which kept alive not only many a working class family but also most of the *Bhadralog* families ordinarily with limited and inelastic incomes. But, alas, this is only a pointer to the vicious circles created by inflation in the economic life of the country!

I have already referred to the question of Rehabilitation, which the ravages of the famine have brought to the fore. Short-time schemes, to use current expressions, have actively been taken in hand and will be dovetailed into long-term projects, involving legislation and large financial outlays which aim at a permanent amelioration of the condition of our people. We have been witnesses to scenes of suffering and desolation almost beyond endurance. We have seen and heard of deaths by the thousand in circumstances which might easily make us suspect that all is not well with civilisation based on the Idea of Progress. We have on our hands large numbers of orphans and destitutes, many of them debilitated and diseased, who dread to return to their deserted homes and fields. This is the GREAT PROBLEM immediately before us—the After-Famine Problem. But the solution of the problem offers us great opportunities of effecting a true and lasting rehabilitation. As we look forward, not without trepidation, to a successful fruition of our schemes, we derive sustenance for our continued endeavour from the exhortation of the Trojan Leader to his harassed band, words which were my lesson in early youth, words which have been the stand-by of the latter part of my own little existence:

...forsan et haec olim meminisse iuvabit.

Durate et vosmet rebus servate secundis.

["Perhaps even these (dreadful) things it may one day be pleasing to remember. Toil on and preserve yourselves for happier circumstances."]

(Cheers from Coalition Benches.)

STATEMENT I.

Bengal Budget, 1944-45.

[Figures are in thousands.]

	Actuals, 1942-43.	1943-44. Budget.	1943-44. Revised.	Budget, 1944-45.
Receipts—				
Opening Balance	1,32,40	2,60,46	2,60,46	2,47,87
Revenue Receipts	16,46,42	18,43,89	21,34,09	21,97,44
Receipts from Debt Heads ..	31,03,77	44,50,12	1,15,49,94	85,35,17
Total ..	48,82,59	65,54,47	1,39,44,49	1,09,80,48
Expenditure—				
Revenue Expenditure	16,79,18	25,80,57	32,53,60	30,43,78
Capital Expenditure	−56	50,29	29,63,49	−17,20,34
Expenditure on Debt Heads ..	29,43,51	36,63,40	74,79,53	1,07,21,72
Closing Balance	2,60,46	2,60,21	2,47,87	−10,64,68
Total ..	48,82,59	65,54,47	1,39,44,49	1,09,80,48
Net Result.				
Surplus +				
Deficit—				
(a) On Revenue Account ..	−32,76	−7,36,68	−11,19,51	−8,46,34
(b) Outside Revenue Account ..	+1,60,82	+7,36,43	+11,06,92	−4,66,21
(c) Net, excluding Opening Balance	+1,28,06	−25	−12,59	−13,12,55

STATEMENT II.

Treasury bills issued during 1943-44.

Date of issue.	Amount.	Date of repayment.
4-8-1943	1½ crores ..	4-11-1943.
17-9-1943	50 lakhs ..	17-9-1944.
4-11-1943	4 crores ..	4-2-1944.
4-12-1943	3 „ ..	4-3-1944.
20-12-1943	8 „ ..	20-3-1944.
4-2-1944	3 „ ..	4-5-1944.
26-2-1944	3 „ ..	26-5-1944.
4-3-1944	3 „ ..	4-6-1944.
18-3-1944	3 „ ..	18-6-1944.
31-3-1944	3 „ ..	30-6-1944

STATEMENT III.

Provincial indebtedness on 31st March 1944 and 31st March 1945.

[The figures are in thousands of rupees.]

	31st March 1944.	31st March 1945.
I. *Indebtedness*—		
Public—		
Treasury Bills	15,50,00	..
Imperial Bank—Cash Credit account ..	18,00,00	12,00,00
Government of India—		
Ways and Means, 1942 .	2,50,00	2,50,00
Ways and Means, 1943	3,00,00	3,00,00
Rice Loans—		
Out of 1¼ crores	37,50	.
Out of 4 crores ..	1,00,00	..
Wheat loan ..	87,50	..
Civil Defence loan	2,04,10	2,78,07
Loan for closing Damodar Bund Breach .	1,09,00	1,09,00
Grow More Food loans .	63,32	25,00
Total	45,01,42	21,62,07
II *Assets*		
Stocks		
Stocks of foodgrains—		
Other than Wheat . ..	28,00,00	12,00,00
Wheat ..	1,08,97	..
Stock of salt	56,00	56,00
Stock of sugar	10,00	..
Total stocks ..	29,74,97	12,56,00
Closing balance ..	2,47,87	10,64,68
Total assets ..	32,22,84	1,91,32
Net uncovered indebtedness (*i.e.*, I *minus* II) ..	12,78,58	19,70,75

Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned at 6-45 p.m. till 3-30 p.m. on Thursday, the 24th February, 1944, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Thursday, the 24th February, 1944, at 3-30 p.m.

Present:

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY) in the Chair, 11 Hon'ble Ministers and 173 members.

Obituary.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Ladies and gentlemen, before we proceed with the business of the House, it is my melancholy duty to refer to the death of Mrs. Kasturba Gandhi who breathed her last at 7-35 p.m. on the 22nd February, 1944.

She was unostentatious and unassuming in her ways. She avoided the limelight. But she never shirked responsibility and devoted herself wholeheartedly to the service of her country. In spite of her many-sided activities she was a good housewife. Many feel that due to her personal devotion her illustrious husband was able to achieve success in his fields of activity. She represented the best and noblest in Indian womanhood quiet and unassuming yet resolute and devoted to her duty. By her death, India has sustained an irreparable loss and I feel that it is the desire of the House to send a message of condolence to Mr. Gandhi in his bereavement I hope members will signify their assent by rising in their seats.

(Members then rose in their seats.)

Thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen; Secretary will do the needful. The House stands adjourned for half an hour as a mark of respect to the departed soul.

(At this stage the House was accordingly adjourned for half an hour.)

(After adjournment.)

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Belongings of security prisoners at the time of their release.

***107. Mr. KHAGENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Jail authorities on the strength of a circular from the Inspector-General of Prisons compel the security prisoners, at the time of their release from long detention, to leave behind each and every article even the clothing of their daily personal use that were supplied to them in Jail without taking into consideration whether those security prisoners have got with them sufficient personal clothings, etc., essential for use immediately after release?

(*b*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to lay on the Table a copy of the said circular?

(*c*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware—

(*i*) that in similar circumstance in 1937-38 the detenus were allowed to take with them all articles supplied to them at Government cost during the periods of their detention; and

(*ii*) they were provided with monthly subsistence allowances for at least six months after their release?

(*d*) If the answer to (*c*) is in the affirmative, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of issuing necessary instructions to the department concerned to follow the practice referred to in clause (*c*)?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) No.

(*b*) Does not arise.

(*c*) Yes.

(*d*) Under recent orders security prisoners are allowed to take away on release their entire personal articles except a few lodging furniture supplied to them wholly or partly at Government cost and also to send their old articles (on their written authority) to their families and public charity even during detention.

The Hon'ble Minister does not consider it desirable to issue any instruction for monthly subsistence allowance to a security prisoner for six months after release

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: With reference to answer (*d*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what finally becomes of the lodging furniture for which Government pay only partly?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: For some items Government pay only partly, but most of the articles are paid for by Government wholly.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: I want to know what becomes of the furniture for which Government pay only partly.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: With reference to the second paragraph of answer (*d*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is the policy of Government to examine the hardship of the security prisoners and their families immediately after their release with a view to continue their allowance?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: So far Government are not aware of any hardship to the prisoners after release

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Government have continued the allowances given to the families of the prisoners immediately after their release?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The position is this: previously, as has been referred to, in 1937-38, prisoners who were detained under the Bengal Criminal Law (Amendment) Act were paid some sustenance allowance after release, but the security prisoners are now detained under a different Act altogether.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government consider the desirability of continuing the allowances to prisoners at least so long as they do not revert to their normal occupation after training?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Government have no such proposal.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: With reference to answer (*d*), will Government consider the desirability of making it a general rule that the lodging furniture for which Government pay only partly should be sold and the sale-proceeds distributed *pro rata* among the contributors including the security prisoners themselves?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: If the honourable member will make a specific proposal, Government may consider it.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us in view of the reply just now given that Government used to continue payment of allowances to prisoners detained under the Bengal Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, why there will be this differential treatment between the two sets of detained prisoners?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That question does not arise. There are prisoners of two different categories; one set of prisoners are detained under a certain Act and there is another set of prisoners who are detained under a different Act.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: In view of the fact that these prisoners were detained without any trial and in view of the fact that just after their release they find themselves practically stranded, will the Government consider the desirability of continuing their allowance at least for 3 months after their release?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I have already answered that question. I have said that Government are not aware of any hardship to prisoners after their release.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Sir, my question has not been replied to. My question was definite, viz., whether Government would consider the desirability of continuing the allowance at least for 3 months after the release of the prisoners.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That is a request for action.

Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: Did Government receive any petition from the prisoners at Rajshahi that they were not allowed to take away their belongings while leaving?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: No, Sir. Government circular, dated 11th November, 1943, expressly directs Superintendents of Jails to allow security prisoners to take away almost all the articles except certain articles like lodging furniture, etc.

Security prisoner Babu Susil Kumar Banerji.

***108. Mr. P. BANERJI:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether the case of Babu Susil Kumar Banerji interned at Mahestala in the district of 24-Parganas was placed before the tribunal set up for examining the case of security prisoners?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what was the recommendation of the tribunal about him?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Babu Susil Kumar Banerji was an employee of the Corporation of Calcutta?

(*d*) If the answer to (*c*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) his monthly income;

(*ii*) the number of his dependents; and

(*iii*) whether he was the only earning member in his family?

(*e*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any allowance is given to him or to his family? If so, what is the amount?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): Babu Susil Kumar Banerji is no longer interned in Mahestala in the district of 24-Parganas. He was released from restriction on the 11th June, 1943.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us the date on which the internment order was passed on Babu Sushil Kumar Banerjee?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: He was interned on the 5th December, 1941.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us if any allowance was granted to him after he had been interned?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Yes, Sir, he was granted an allowance

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: What was the amount?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Rs. 28 per mensem.

Acquisition of lands for the Bengal Road and Captain Licks Road.

***109. Mr. JNANENDRA CHANDRA MAJUMDAR:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works Department be pleased to state whether—

(*i*) a road, named Bengal Road and Captain Licks Road, has been constructed by the Government from Subhapurghat to Zoraganj in police-station Mirsarai, district Chittagong, during the year 1943;

(*ii*) the lands through which the road passes were acquired without the consent of and under protest from the owners of those lands; and

(*iii*) no compensations for the lands and crops thereon have been paid to the owners of the lands?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reasons thereof?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he is considering the desirability of taking steps so that adequate compensations are paid to the owners of the lands mentioned above?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR (on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prasanna Pain): (*a*)(*i*) Yes.

(*ii*) Considering the urgency the lands were acquired under the Defence of India Rules.

(*iii*) Compensations have not yet been paid.

(*b*) and (*c*) The question of payment of compensations has been taken up by the Collector of Chittagong and payment will be expedited.

Starred Question No. 110.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, this question may be held over.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, it is held over.

Theft of quinine from Comilla District Board office and supply by Government.

***111. Mr. SHAHED ALI:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) the quantity of quinine supplied to the Comilla District Board in 1942-43 by the Government; and

(*ii*) whether it is a fact that some quantity of quinine was stolen or missing from the District Board office in December, 1942?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) (*ii*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) the quantity of such missing quinine;

(*ii*) the date of occurrence;

(*iii*) whether the District Board authority informed the police of this theft;

(*iv*) if so, when;

(*v*) whether the police has sent a final report in the matter;

(*vi*) whether the Government have supplied a fresh quantity of quinine in view of malaria prevailing in the district; and

(*vii*) if so, what is the quantity?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi Jalaluddin Ahmad): (*a*)(*i*) A grant of Rs. 14,000.

(*ii*) Yes.

(*b*) (*i*) The quantity of quinine stolen, 78 lbs. 8 oz.

(*ii*) 6th December, 1942.

(*iii*), (*v*) and (*vi*) Yes.

(*iv*) 6th December, 1942.

(*vii*) 498 lbs. of quinine and 289 lbs. of cinchona febrifuge have been supplied this year to the District Board. Besides, 1,050 lbs. of quinine and 398 lbs. of cinchona for free distribution and 695 lbs. of quinine for sale in the district have been supplied to the District Magistrate.

Mr. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if any trace has been found of the culprit?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: No, Sir.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when the final report was submitted?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: 11th December, 1942.

Mr. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ: What was the result of the final report?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: The report was that no trace of the culprit could be found.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how many servants and members of the District Board were examined in this matter?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: I want notice.

Treatment of security prisoner Sreejut Kamala Kanta Ghosh in the Medical College.

***111A.** (SHORT NOTICE) **Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that—

(*i*) Sreejut Kamala Kanta Ghosh, B.SC., Baidyashastri—a security prisoner in the Presidency Jail—has been suffering from heart trouble for some time past;

(*ii*) his wife petitioned the Government for his immediate release on account of his illness or in case release is not ordered to get him properly treated in the Medical College Hospital?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps, if any, the Government have taken in regard to the petition by his wife?

(*c*) Do the Government consider the desirability of releasing the said Sj. Kamala Kanta Ghosh?

(*d*) If the answer to (*c*) is in the negative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he is considering the desirability of having him immediately removed to the Medical College Hospitals for treatment of his heart trouble?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) and (*d*) Orders have been passed for the prisoner's removal to the Medical College Hospitals for X-ray examination of his chest. But as X-ray plates are not available at the Medical College Hospitals, the prisoner has not yet been removed to the hospitals. All necessary steps will be taken for his treatment according to medical advice.

(*c*) No.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us when the order was passed for the removal of the prisoner to the Medical College Hospital?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: On the 5th January, 1944.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: With reference to answer (*b*) and (*d*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the Government have been informed as to when the X-ray plates are likely to be available?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: All attempts are being made to procure the plates.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: In view of the fact that for the purpose of diagnosis it is not necessary to have plates and that taking the patient and presenting him before the X-ray is sufficient, do the Government think it desirable that he should be at once removed to the hospital and presented for X-ray?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The Medical Officer of the Presidency Jail has recommended an X-ray examination by a skiagram picture.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware of the fact that the X-ray Department has long ago been abolished?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That is not the information.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Is that the Hon'ble Minister's first-hand information?

(No answer.)

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what other steps are being taken by Government for his treatment?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The medical officer before taking up his treatment would like to see a skiagram picture As I have pointed out earlier, the treatment would depend on the result of the X-ray examination.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: With reference to answer (*b*) and (*d*), may I know whether plates are available anywhere else?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That question, strictly speaking, does not arise. I cannot tell you whether they would be available elsewhere or not. I can only say steps are being taken to procure the plates.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: In view of the delay or rather the impossibility of getting X-ray plates for such a long time, does the Hon'ble Minister consider it necessary that an alternative method of diagnosis should be considered by the medical authorities and will such a suggestion be made?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That is a question of medical opinion. The doctor wants to be sure about his diagnosis and that his chest is free from infection.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: How long will the diagnosis be held up for want of plates?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: For a short time.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Is the Government satisfied that X-ray examination is not possible outside?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: It will be possible in the Medical College Hospitals.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us what is the result of the clinical diagnosis?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The doctors have not yet finally diagnosed because they have not yet examined the X-ray picture of the patient.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: I want to know the result of the clinical diagnosis.

(No answer.)

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: In view of the fact that X-ray examination is necessary, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government are considering the desirability of having that examination outside the Government hospital?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Yes, if it is impossible to have the X-ray examination at the Medical College Hospital.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: When will that conclusion be arrived at that it is impossible?

(No answer.)

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(answers to which were laid on the table)

Government officers in Bakarganj district.

43. Mr. UPENDRA NATH EDBAR: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether the District Magistrate and Additional District Magistrate of the district of Bakarganj and the Subdivisional Officers of Bhola, Patuakhali, Pirojpur and Barisal Sadar all belong to the same community?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) be in the affirmative, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of posting some officers belonging to some other community in place of some of the officers mentioned in (*a*)?

MINISTER in charge of the HOME DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) No.

(*b*) Does not arise.

Public Prosecutors in Bengal.

44. Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Judicial Department be pleased to lay on the Table a statement showing—

(*a*) the present number of Public Prosecutors in Bengal; and

(*b*) the number of them that are—

(*i*) Hindus, and

(*ii*) Muslims

in each of the five Divisions of the Province?

MINISTER in charge of the JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Nawab Musharruff Hossain, Khan Bahadur): A statement is laid on the Table.

Statement referred to in unstarred question No. 44.

Division.		Public Prosecutors.		
		Hindus.	Muslims.	Total.
Burdwan	..	5	1	6
Presidency	..	4	3	7
Rajshahi	..	5	3	8
Dacca	..	2	2*	4
Chittagong	..	..	3	3
Total	..	16	12	28

*Out of these two one post is vacant at present.

Flood in rivers of Bengal since 1933.

45. Mr. NIKUNJA BEHARI MAITI: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works Department be pleased to lay on the Table a statement showing during the decade from the years 1933 to 1943—

(*i*) the number of floods in each river of Bengal that submerged the adjoining areas; and

(*ii*) the extent of loss suffered in terms of money in each of these floods—

(1) by the people, and

(2) by the Government by way of relief, repair of *bunds*, etc.?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) what definite measures, if any, have the Government taken for taming each of the above rivers; and

(*ii*) the extent of success in each case?

MINISTER in charge of the COMMUNICATIONS and WORKS DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prasanna Pain): The information is not readily available and its collection would involve an amount of time and labour not justifiable under existing conditions.

Inconvenience of passengers of the Bengal and Assam Railway.

46. Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DUTTA: (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works Department aware that—

(*i*) great inconvenience has been caused to the travelling public for—

(1) lights not being provided in the Bengal and Assam Railway train compartments, specially in the Chittagong Division and East Bengal zone,

(2) unusual curtailment in the number of passenger trains,

(3) overcrowding on account of insufficient accommodation in the trains, and

(*ii*) there have been great difficulties in the matter of transport of goods of the civil population even by parcels?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps the Government have taken to have these grievances removed?

(c) If the answer to (3) is in the negative, do the Government consider the desirability of moving the Government of India to have these grievances immediately removed?

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PRASANNA PAIN: (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) The non-provision of lights is due to an acute shortage of electric bulbs and also innumerable thefts of bulbs from trains. The curtailment in the passenger trains and overcrowding are due to ever-increasing military demands. Difficulties in transport of goods are due to the fact that on account of restrictions on the transport of goods by goods trains service, consignments which in normal times would have been booked at goods rates are now being booked as parcels, and the accommodation on parcels trains is limited and parcels trains have had to be cut down owing to military demands. In the above circumstances, Government are not in a position at present to take any special steps to have the grievances in question removed.

(*c*) It is not considered desirable to move the Government of India in the matter.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that on account of the transport difficulties goods necessary for relief work cannot be sent?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: Railway administration is taking particular care so far as relief work is concerned.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the delay occasioned by transport difficulties is not causing inconvenience in respect of relief work?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: On account of these transport difficulties there is some amount of inconvenience.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: In view of the admitted darkness in passenger trains and in view of the consequent difficulties to passengers, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps are being taken by the Government in order to ameliorate the difficulties of passengers travelling?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: Government have not considered it necessary to move the Government of India who are responsible for the administration of railways in respect of difficulties caused by war.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is not extremely precarious for ladies to travel on account of darkness in passenger trains?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: That is quite true.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps have been taken by the Government for preventing thefts of bulbs and for ensuring proper lighting arrangements in railway compartments?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: Government have taken necessary steps to prevent such thefts.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason why Government do not consider it desirable to move the Government of India for removing the admitted grievances?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: Because Government thought that on account of war transport difficulties could not be fully removed.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government will consider the desirability of introducing kerosene lamps in every compartment and engage at least one person as a picket to see that bulbs are not taken away?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: On the other hand, it has been notified that passengers are requested to have hand torches.

Mr. SUKUMAR DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why there is shortage of bulbs in the Bengal and Assam Railway and not in other railways?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: The question relates to Bengal and Assam Railway and therefore I am not prepared to answer questions relating to other railways.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: With reference to answer (c), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is because the Government of Bengal is afraid of moving the Government of India that the Government of India is not being moved to remove the grievances of the public or whether it is because of the fact that it does not consider the grievances to be true?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That question does not arise

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether there has arisen a critical situation in the mofussil on account of difficulties in the matter of transport of goods?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: Government admit that it is so, but that is unavoidable

(Unstarred question No. 47, was called but was held over on account of the absence of the Hon'ble Mr H S. Suhrawardy.)

Adjournment Motion.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Sir, I have given notice of an adjournment motion of which I have sent a copy to you——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Kundu, I have not yet considered the question of admissibility of your motion although I think under the rules it is admissible I shall in the first instance ascertain the present position of the hunger-strike from the Hon'ble the Home Minister.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: May we know, Sir, what is the actual motion?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is an adjournment motion relating to a hunger-strike in the Rajshahi Jail.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, I doubt if the honourable member can definitely tell this House as to whether there is any reason for him to apprehend that there is now a hunger-strike. I think he has no

authority to say that there is now a hunger-strike. The letter to which he has referred is dated 18th but as far as my information goes, there is no hunger-strike at present in the Rajshahi Jail.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir. Before discussing the merits of the motion or of its admissibility you have been pleased to observe that before the motion is placed before the House, you have to ascertain the position from the Hon'ble Home Minister and I hope that the Hon'ble Minister will give us the benefit of his experience and wisdom as to how things actually stand now. Instead of putting a counter-question to the mover, it is better that he should make a definite statement.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: But he has made a statement.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, the information on which the Hon'ble the Leader of the House stands is something that has not been made public to this House as yet. Here is an honourable member of the House seeking to move an adjournment motion on certain facts in his possession but at this stage you have neither allowed him to move it nor have you tried to enquire the source of his information or the date of his information. It is for the Leader of the House to state if he is in a position to contradict the information. That would be more in reality with the actual state of affairs with regard to the situation to be appreciated by the House. On the other hand he has put to our friend on this side of the House a question as to whether he is in a position to say definitely whether there is any hunger-strike now but we would like to put this question to him: "Are you in a position to deny it?"

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, I do not question the admissibility of this motion nor the consideration that it is a question of hunger-strike. But it is quite possible that the hunger-strike might have been called off by this time. Therefore, I enquired of the Hon'ble the Home Minister as to whether there is any strike at all or not, and if there has been anything, whether that has ended at all or not. As regards this motion, under the rules it is admissible and I do not find any reason to disallow it. But one thing to be considered is that you are just going to discuss the Budget and in the general discussion of the Budget there is no bar, while discussing on the Budget as a whole, to discuss any particular matter involving certain principles of administration. Therefore, I would advise you not to press this motion but I shall hear the Hon'ble the Home Minister.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Sir, I am very much obliged to you for the suggestion thrown out by the Chair. It was not in a spirit of our desire to stand on technical rules that we placed this matter before the House. Our intention was to give an expression to our sense of apprehension after having got the information that there was a hunger-strike going on in the jail. But we are absolutely prepared to abide by the statement that the Hon'ble the Home Minister might make in this matter. The information is exclusively in his own knowledge and in his possession, and it is for him and him alone to enlighten the House whether there is any hunger-strike at all. If he is in a position to say that there is no hunger-strike nothing would be more welcome to this side of the House. We want to place this matter not in a spirit of conflict but we only bring this matter to his notice

in a spirit of enquiry. If he can assure us that there is no hunger-strike going on, and if there is any possibility of a hunger-strike he will enquire into it, that will more than satisfy us.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, I have already stated that as far as my information goes there is no hunger-strike at present in the Rajshahi Jail. I think the information on which the honourable member has based his motion is dated the 18th. Therefore I do not see how he can get up and claim that the hunger-strike started on the 22nd. If there was a hunger-strike I should have received a wire. Therefore I assume that there is no hunger-strike.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Kundu, I hope you will accept the statement of the Hon'ble the Leader of the House and will not press the motion.

MESSAGE FROM THE BENGAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The Bengal Destitute Persons (Repatriation and Relief) Bill, 1944.

The Secretary then read the following message which has been received from the Bengal Legislative Council, namely, "The concurrence of the Bengal Legislative Assembly be asked to the Bengal Destitute Persons (Repatriation and Relief) Bill, 1944, as passed by the Bengal Legislative Council at its meeting held on the 17th February, 1944".

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS.

Presentation of the Supplementary Estimates for 1943-44.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Sir, I beg to present the supplementary estimate of expenditure for the current year. The total covered by the estimate is Rs. 36,24,48,000. Out of this Rs. 2,18,000 is "charged" and the balance is "voted". The demand is spread over 22 heads, of which one, namely, "85-A—Capital Outlay on Government Schemes connected with the War, 1939", is outside the revenue account. The demand under the capital head "85-A" amounts to about Rs. 29¼ crores. In the Budget for the current year it was assumed that the unadjusted capital outlay on Government's trading operations at the close of the year would be a sum of Rs. 50,00,000 for the building up of a reserve stock of salt. It is now estimated that, over and above this, capital to the extent of 29¼ crores is likely to remain invested in stocks of foodgrains and sugar. A demand has therefore to be made for this amount. It is anticipated that the bulk of the stock in hand will be disposed of in the coming year.

The next largest item is a demand of 2 crores 13 lakhs under "54—Famine". The extra expenditure is due to special measures undertaken for the relief of destitutes from starvation and diseases. Apart from larger expenditure on gratuitous relief in the form of cash doles and free kitchens, the more important items responsible for the increase are 33 lakhs for temporary poor-houses and destitute camps, 33 lakhs for emergency medical relief centres and 40 lakhs for the free distribution of cloth and blankets among destitutes.

The demand under "63—Extraordinary Charges" is a little over 2 crores. Part of this is due to the expansion of the Department of Civil Supplies and the introduction of rationing in Calcutta and certain industrial areas. The balance is due to the fact that the loss on sale of subsidised food is expected to be larger than was originally estimated.

The extra expenditure of 78½ lakhs under "Jails" is due to a large increase in prison population coupled with greatly increased cost of foodstuff, clothing, medicines and other contingencies.

Under "Agriculture" the additional provision——

Point of order.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I have at this stage to rise on a point of order. I have to invite your attention to section 81 of the Government of India Act regarding the presentation of supplementary statements of expenditure. It states that "if in respect of any financial year further expenditure from the revenues of the Province becomes necessary over and above the expenditure theretofore authorised for that year, the Governor shall cause to be laid before the Chamber or Chambers a supplementary statement showing the estimated amount of that expenditure, and the provisions of the preceding sections shall have effect in relation to that statement and that expenditure as they have effect in relation to the annual financial statement and the expenditure mentioned therein."

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I am coming to that. It will not be so easy for you to dispose it of.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is for me to decide.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Therefore I must be in a position to lay it before you I find from the summary which is now read out by the Hon'ble Minister in charge——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He has not finished yet.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: He has already stated that he is going to demand a total provision of more than Rs. 36 crores and a half of which Rs. 36,22,00,000 are going to be voted and Rs. 2,18,000 only to be charged. Sir, the total amount which was provided for expenditure for the year 1943-44 not long ago in September session of the House was on revenue account only Rs. 25,80,00,000. By no stretch of imagination could it therefore be said that Government had to wait till now to find out if by reappropriations within the grant, different expenditure or additional expenditure provided in the supplementary demand, could be met before they made up their mind to come before this House for supplementary estimates.

Sir, I submit that when the previous budget was placed before the House in the month of September, Government knew definitely that they had committed themselves to large expenses and they actually defrauded this Legislature by putting up a much reduced sum for our vote at that time. (Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Is that a point of order?) I would like to know, as is required under this Act, when did they discover that they were going to exceed the amount provided by this House? (Mr. FAZLUR

RAHMAN: That is not necessary.) That is necessary as the Act says that as soon as it is discovered, Government has to come to this House for supplies. It is not desirable that money should be spent out of the revenues and towards the close of the year when every mischief has been done, you come to the House with a view to regularise certain misdeeds that the Government have committed. We refuse, Sir, to have anything to do with such supplementary estimates which go much beyond any conceivable idea of supplementary estimates. This is like "বারো হাত কাঁকুড়ের তের হাত বিচি।" I submit that it infringes the Act.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please clear the point.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, my point is that under section 81 Government have to come to the House immediately they discover that a larger expenditure—more than what was provided in the original estimate by the House—is going to be incurred. If they do not do it, they infringe the Act.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do you mean to say that Government were aware of it in September?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Even before September when the last budget was passed. If they were not, I would like to know. If they do not do it, they infringe the Act. If they were not aware, we would like to know when the expenditure provided for under these various heads were actually incurred and sought to be expended.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: On a point of order, Sir. The point of order is this that under section 81——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is that a connected point of order?

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: There is no doubt that there is some connection with Dr. Sanyal's point, but it is altogether a new point. Section 81 provides that supplementary estimates——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your point of order, Dr. Sanyal?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: My point of order is that there should be no possibility of Government coming to this House at this stage with supplementary estimates of this character. The Government of India Act does not provide for it and there is no provision for it in the Act. Supplementary estimates cannot be placed after the expenses have been incurred.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: On a point of order, Sir.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I submit, Sir, that you should dispose of Dr. Sanyal's point of order first before you start with a new one. Mr. Chaudhuri has already said that he has got something absolutely new.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: I am going to raise a point of order and it is for the Chair to consider it. It is not for Sir Nazimuddin to object to it in anticipation.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Sir, when there is a point of order, until that point of order is decided, another point of order cannot be raised.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will consider this and even I will ask you to tell your view-point. Let me hear whether it is a connected point of order or a different point of order.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Sir, my point of order is this. Section 81 of the Government of India Act provides for supplementary estimates. It does not provide for placing for the approval of the Legislature expenses already incurred. It only provides for supplementary estimates and in view of the speech that the Hon'ble Finance Minister is going to deliver in support of his supplementary estimates, it is quite apparent that these expenses have all been incurred. These are not supplementary estimates. These have gone beyond the stage of estimates. These are all incurred expenditure and there is no provision in the Government of India Act for the Government to come forward and to have the approval of the Legislature for expenses incurred. Under section 81, they cannot come before the House, but they can, I think, come for regularisation of expenditure after the statement of expenditure has been placed before the Public Accounts Committee and the Public Accounts Committee have recommended regularisation of those expenditure. Otherwise, so far as supplementary estimates are concerned, section 81 only deals with estimates and nothing more than estimates. It does not deal with expenditure incurred. So, the statement and the speech of the Hon'ble Finance Minister are out of order.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let me further enquire whether after the budget session of September there was any other session. This is the session in which they are placing supplementary estimates.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: These are not estimates.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You call them as expenditure already incurred. Let me hear the entire speech and then I will consider the case.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The speech, Sir, is *ultra vires*. That is our point. We have already listened to him. We gave him five minutes to see whether he was going to refer to matters which have already been done. He has referred to expenditure, viz., expenditure in connection with the *aus* crop scheme, which is over. That money has already been spent. I waited to see whether he was going to refer to matters of that character. Sir, this is a privilege of the House and no Parliament would allow it.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, I will give my decision after hearing the speech of the Finance Minister.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Sir, I may say that under "Agriculture" the additional sum of Rs. 59½ lakhs is due to larger expenditure on "Grow More Food" schemes mainly as a result of——

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: On a point of order, Sir. The Hon'ble Finance Minister is taking his stand on section 81. He is speaking of expenditure incurred, but section 81 does not speak of expenditure incurred; it only speaks of estimates and nothing more than that. Sir, it is quite apparent from the speech of the Hon'ble Finance Minister that he is speaking of expenditure incurred and not of estimates at all.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Sir, may I ask the Hon'ble Minister to explain under what section of the Government of India Act he is placing these estimates?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Of course under section 81. There is nothing in the Act which precludes coming before the Legislature even on the last day of the financial year for any expenditure incurred. The spirit of the Act is that you must come to the Legislature as soon as possible. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Is that your interpretation?) That is my interpretation.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: When was it incurred?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: It is not all incurred; some was incurred.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Was it not possible to include them when the last budget was passed?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: It was not possible to forecast what expenditure would be incurred. Besides, I made it perfectly clear on more than one occasion that we will have to come up for supplementary demands. I gave this warning more than once.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, your point is that the Hon'ble Finance Minister is not entitled to present the supplementary demand at this stage after the amount has already been spent.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Not only that, when the last budget was passed, Government knew that this expenditure would be incurred. Mr. Goswami in his speech has already admitted that.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: It was impossible to know in September what amount would be required. We knew that a large amount would be required and we gave due warnings to the Legislature. I said that I would come up before the Legislature at the first possible opportunity and this, I think, is the earliest opportunity.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: That is not in compliance with section 81.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: That complies with section 81 which lays down certain procedure——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, that strengthens my point again. It is clear from the admission made by the Hon'ble Finance Minister that he knew it before. It was within his knowledge and therefore the provision of section 81 has been infringed, because although it was within his knowledge, although it was perfectly clear to him that further expenditure from the revenues of the province would be required, he did not come to the House even on the 14th September when the House was discussing the general budget for the year 1943-44.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Sir, it was impossible to give any estimate in advance. Considering the schemes that we had in hand it was not possible to give an accurate estimate.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, this is a very big question. I think you have not gone through rule 17 of the Governor's Rules. As I have already stated, let me hear the entire speech of the Finance Minister first.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Governor's Rules cannot override the provisions of the Act.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let the Finance Minister finish his speech first and then I shall give my decision.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Speech on what?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Speech on supplementary demand.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: We cannot proceed unless this point is disposed of first. Which particular part of rule 17 of the Governor's Rules do you refer to?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Whole of the rule, particularly sub-rule (*4*).

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Rule 17 runs thus:—

"(1) The Governor exercising his individual judgment may from time to time allot a day for the presentation of a supplementary statement of expenditure.

(2) The Governor exercising his individual judgment shall allot one or more days not earlier than three days after the day allotted for such presentation—

(*a*) for voting on the demands for supplementary grants, or

(*b*) for discussion of the estimates of the expenditure charged on the revenues of the province, other than estimates relating to expenditure referred to in paragraph (*a*) of sub-section (*3*) of section 78 of the Act, or

(*c*) for both such voting and discussion as the case may be.

(3) At 6-30 p.m. on the day or on the last of such days as may be allotted under sub-rule (*2*) all discussion shall terminate and the Speaker shall forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of all the outstanding matters in connection with the demands for supplementary grants.

(4) The consideration of the business referred to in sub-rule (*2*) shall not, on the day or days allotted therefor, be anticipated by any motion for adjournment or be interrupted in any manner whatsoever, nor shall any dilatory motion be moved in regard thereto."

Sir, where is the relevant rule?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: There is one thing I would like to say. Everything is an estimate until 1st April; until actuals are known, everything is an estimate.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, there are two or three points in this connection which I would like you to bear in mind. First that it is the practice and it has been the practice of every Government in every province to submit estimates under this rule after the expenditure has been incurred. My second point is that the only interpretation you can give to this rule is by admitting that you have got to bring up these after the expenditure has been incurred; because supposing at any time Government were called upon to spend money for something for which provision has

been made actually in the budget and if the allotment provided is exceeded, it is not expected that they must wait till the approval of the legislature is obtained before they can incur expenditure. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The language is "they must".) If that be so, then all those people on whom money has been spent for saving them from starvation, disease and death will have to be allowed to die rather than spend money. Sir, it is obvious that there must be a provision to spend money in anticipation of the approval of the legislature, and it is not possible ever to estimate what the estimate is going to be. Then again, Sir, what happens in those cases where the expenditure is exceeded? I submit, Sir, that looking at it from the practical point of view there can be no other interpretation of section 81 except in the manner in which we have come forward to get the approval of the legislature. I think the Hon'ble Finance Minister's answer is absolutely conclusive, namely, that until the actuals are received, everything is an estimate.

Mr. A. F. STARK: May I say something, Sir? These estimates have been presented. The honourable member raised his point of order half way through the speech after the estimates had been presented. Therefore, Sir, the presentation of the estimates is a *fait accompli*. (Cries of "No, no from Opposition benches.)

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: With reference to the point raised by Mr. Stark, we have been waiting to hear the Hon'ble Finance Minister whether these are really estimates or incurred expenditure. Therefore, Sir, we could not anticipate the speech of the Hon'ble Minister. We were under the impression that these were the estimates but when the Finance Minister spoke in support of the statement only at that time we could understand that they were not estimates but incurred expenditure. We raised the point of order just at the proper time.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The whole question is this. Government still insist that they are estimates. I will give my decision after hearing the statement of the Hon'ble Finance Minister. Possibly, he may say something in the end. Let me therefore hear the entire speech. I shall afterwards give my ruling.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir, regarding the last portion of your observations. A point of order has been raised and it is for you to give your decision. You can do it off-hand or we can wait. Since a point of order has been raised *apropos* the statement made by the Hon'ble Minister, it is not fair or consistent with Parliamentary practice to allow the Hon'ble Minister to carry on with his speech of doubtful legality before you give your decision in the matter.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have already given my decision on this point. I have allowed the Hon'ble Minister to continue and to finish his statement.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS.

Presentation of the Supplementary Estimates for 1943-44.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: The increase of 41¾ lakhs under "Public Health" is due mainly to the following additional

provisions, viz., 13 lakhs under rural water-supply for providing tube wells in areas affected by epidemics; 14 lakhs under epidemic charges for the control of cholera and small-pox; and 12 lakhs for the free distribution of quinine.

The increase of 32¾ lakhs under "Irrigation" is due to larger outlay on repair of the Damodar Left Embankment and other irrigation embankments damaged by flood.

I need not trouble honourable members with a recital of the reasons for the demands under the remaining heads which are comparatively small. The reasons for all the demands presented to the House have been set forth in the Explanatory Memorandum and will be gone into more fully by the Hon'ble Minister concerned as each demand is moved.

I shall again repeat that these are estimates—some expenditure has been incurred, but they still remain as estimates—supplementary estimates which I present before the House.

(At this stage the House was adjourned for 15 minutes for prayer.)

(After adjournment.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, I have looked up section 81 of the Government of India Act on which you have raised your point of order. I will give my decision later on. In the meantime I will ask the Hon'ble Mr. Goswami to move the motions standing in his name.

Presentation of the Report of the Public Accounts Committee.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Sir, as prescribed in rule 114 of the Bengal Legislative Assembly Procedure Rules, I beg to present to the Bengal Legislative Assembly the report of the Committee on Public Accounts on the Appropriation Accounts and Finance Accounts of the Government of Bengal for the year 1941-42 and the Audit Reports thereon.

Presentation of the demands for regularisation of excess expenditure incurred in 1941-42.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to present to the Bengal Legislative Assembly the demands in respect of expenditure incurred in excess of grants and appropriations in 1941-42.

The voted grant was exceeded under three heads, viz., (*a*) Forest; (*b*) Ports and Pilotage; and (*c*) Interest-free advances.

The charged appropriation was exceeded under two heads, viz., (*a*) Superannuation Allowances and Pensions, etc.; and (*b*) Extraordinary Charges.

The reasons for the excess expenditure have been set forth fully in the memorandum which has been placed in the hands of honourable members.

It will appear from paragraphs 6 and 7 of the Report of the Committee on Public Accounts on the Appropriation Account and Finance Account of the Government of Bengal for the year 1941-42 and the Audit Reports thereon that the Committee has recommended to the Legislative Assembly that a vote be passed to regularise the excess under "voted" grants and has recommended the regularisation of the charged excess by His Excellency the Governor.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE BUDGET.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to initiate the opposition to the budget presented by the Hon'ble the Finance Minister on Friday last. Sir, I have seen many budgets but how am I going to characterise this particular budget? We have often been told that a budget is a defence budget; we have often been told that a budget is a nation-saving budget. But what is the character of this budget? Is it a nation-strangulating budget or is it a nation-killing budget? The Hon'ble the Finance Minister apparently has pursued the prime-ordeal method known to humanity in basing his estimates on expectations of begging, borrowing and lastly, stealing. The Hon'ble the Finance Minister has presented a budget in which the net expectation from normal revenues of the province is more than 7 crores. In 1942-43 the revenue was Rs. 16,46,00,000; in 1943-44 the revenue was Rs. 21,34,00,000; and in 1944-45 the expected revenue is Rs. 21,97,00,000. Sir, if you will be good enough to look at the last page of the Hon'ble the Finance Minister's speech you will see the net uncovered indebtedness, that is to say, one minus two, is Rs. 19,70,75,000. My mathematics is very wrong and the Hon'ble Finance Minister's mathematics must be absolutely right. Why not add another 230 lakhs and make the net uncovered indebtedness in round figures a sum of Rs. 22 crores? The Hon'ble the Finance Minister like a prodigal son is not afraid of that peculiar human weakness—that weakness known as shamelessness. He himself states that he presents the estimates unashamed. Sir, I am quoting his classical expression, and he is a master of expressions! Unashamed, Sir, he presents the province with a budget with a negative balance of Rs. 10 crores and 64 lakhs. He had an excess of receipt by more than 5 crores and 50 lakhs. If the figures of 1942 are compared with the figures of 1944-45 he had or he expects to have an income-tax pool increment to the extent of Rs. 80 lakhs and he has not made a calculation of the receipts which he expects on the passing of the Agricultural Income-tax Act and on the doubling of the Sales Tax. Therefore, Sir, I say that although he was having a revenue of more than 7 crores of rupees from the figure of 1942-43, he is landing the province with a deficit of Rs. 10,64,00,000. And this notwithstanding the fact that he has obtained from the Government of India loans and advances to the extent of Rs. 12 crores. He has obtained further a subvention in the shape of Treasury Bills which according to his figures between the 4th November, 1943, and the 30th June, 1944, come up to an inconsiderable sum of 32 crores of rupees. In addition, Sir, if you will be good enough to look at the Red Book which, I hope, the Hon'ble the Finance Minister has read, digested and assimilated, there are cash credit advances from the Imperial Bank of India to the extent of Rs. 25 crores and yet the Hon'ble the Finance Minister is in high hopes. His hope rules a land for ever green. He says: "I hope to raise 10 crores more revenue than was raised in the two preceding years." That is to say, his expected revenue would jump from the present budget estimated figure of 22 crores to 32 crores.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Read my speech again.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Brave are his deeds! I know, my honourable friend the Finance Minister writes good English and speaks English better. If I were to recall to his memory the last two pages of his speech which must have been in his Roman hand, he will see on page 11: "I hope to raise 10 crores more revenue than was raised in the two preceding years." It will, I trust, be agreed that we have bestirred ourselves to good purposes, very good purposes indeed, befitting a Trojan leader. Why the early recollections of Troy and Priam, Lord of Troy's folk, came to the memories of the harassed band of the Toilers of the Sea who are functioning as a Ministry in this Province and particularly to my honourable friend I cannot tell. Only the poetic words of Dryen come up to my mind "like another Helen firing another Troy". My honourable friend does not stop there. He has invented a famous doctrine and that doctrine is stated in these words, "taxation is an engine of social and national policy". (Cries of "Shame, shame" from the Opposition Benches.) I shall request my honourable friend to read once more not Scottish bards and Scotch reviewers but a certain article which appeared in the Edinburgh Review on taxation relating to Gladstone's high finance. There the author protested against taxation of humanity from birth till death in a democracy. My honourable friend wishes to proceed further: he not only wishes to tax the people not only here in the earthly region but also in the great hereafter, that undiscovered region from whose bourne no traveller has yet returned nor will ever return our Hon'ble Finance Minister.

Mr. P. BANERJI: You are wrong.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Am I wrong? If Shakespeare is wrong we all are wrong. Unless we are, we know that additional taxation rests upon two important considerations, not perhaps known to the advisers who advise the Finance Ministers in the provinces under Provincial Autonomy under the Government of India Act, 1935, namely, that taxation depends upon the capacity of people to pay and that taxation depends upon whether or not the existing resources have been properly utilised. Here my thesis is that the existing resources of the province have been improperly misapplied. I shall come to the misapplication of the existing resources of the province when I deal with the items relating to expenditure. My honourable friend has been pleased with the jump in the Excise budget. Sir, he says, so far as the Excise duty is concerned with reference to "the geographical chart in front of him" (I should like to have a look at the chart myself); that there has been a jump in the Excise figures to the extent of Rs. 1,12,00,000 and Rs. 1,33,00,000, and he says that it is due to imposition of higher duties upon the sale of liquor and according to him the imposition of higher duties on the sale of liquor has led to a very brilliant logical result, namely, the diminution in the consumption of liquor. Sir, many people are fond of liquor in this world, but so far as my honourable friend's budget is concerned, the position is this: country-spirit in 1940-41 fetched Rs. 65 lakhs; in 1941-42 Rs. 1,16,00,000; in 1942-43, Rs. 1,50,00,000. Sir, I made enquiries from the Treasury Benches of those days as to why was this increase; and I was told that this increase was due to war, namely, due to numerous arrivals, welcome and unwelcome, from across our borders. Sir, no further arrivals from across our eastern borders do we hear of

today and yet in 1943-44 the revised estimates disclosed an income of 1 crore and 80 lakhs; in 1944-45 my honourable friend adds 5 lakhs more and puts the figure at 1 crore and 85 lakhs. There is an expression in the budget which is rather peculiar. It is "India made foreign liquor". Sir, Voltaire once spoke of the Holy Roman Empire. He said—it was not an Empire, it is not Holy and it is not Roman. I put the expression "Roman" last because my friend the Hon'ble the Finance Minister is very fond of Latin. Similarly, an expression was used by the Hon'ble Minister himself in another capacity, perhaps in those degenerate days which differ from these days, that the Indian Civil Service is neither Indian, nor Civil, nor a Service—I talk of service because he talks about service in his budget. Sir, this does not count for the rise in the Excise budget. Under Opium—which is such a good sedative particularly in these days—my honourable friend says nothing like opium—quite, nothing like leather, nothing like budget, nothing like tax—under opium I find in 1940-41 there was a receipt to the extent of 38 lakhs. My honourable friend has increased the receipt by 16 lakhs. *Ganja* my honourable friend has not forgotten—none of us forgets *ganja* particularly in this Assembly. Therefore, in 1940-41 figures have been raised to 55 lakhs, that is, 24 lakhs more. Does this betray diminution in consumption? My honourable friend gives in his budget speech figures about the consumption of country-made liquor. Perhaps the Hon'ble Finance Ministers in these provinces are more familiar with spirituous liquor than opium or *ganja*, but if they are equally familiar for taxation purposes with opium and *ganja*, they will agree that this is a budget of a predominantly Muslim League Ministry looking forward to the acceptance of a policy of prohibition.

Sir, I come to consider receipts from non-judicial stamps. There my honourable friend has kept down the figures by six lakhs. The reason he gives is very peculiar: that last year due to famine conditions sales of immovable property were frequent. This year since famine conditions have all lifted, therefore there will be no more sale of immovable property. I hope my honourable friend here had a similar geographical chart as he had in the case of spirituous or spirited liquor. The entertainment tax, the betting tax, the electricity tax, stand at a statis figure during the years I have mentioned, but the Bengal Finance Act betrays a very interesting figure. Last year's figure was 8 lakhs 59 thousand. This, Sir, you will recollect is in the nature of a poll tax, it is a capitation tax. This year the figure has gone up to 10 lakhs, and yet we are told by my honourable friend that inflation is in the air and all his measures are of a counter-inflationary nature.

Sir, the revised estimates and the budget estimates under the Bengal Finance (Sales Tax) Act are static. Motor Spirits Sales Tax betrays 22 lakhs addition and Bengal Raw Jute Tax 50 lakhs, and there is a difference of 17 lakhs. Is this for the purpose of placating certain interests and certain votes in the country and in the Legislature? I pause for a reply when the time for that reply will come from the Hon'ble the Finance Minister.

Last of all, Sir, I come to the famous capital head 85A. When this new head was introduced I said this ought to be christened "Blockhead"

Whether the head will be seen off the trunk is a question which my honourable friend will be able to answer. My honourable friend in his budget speech has a special predilection for a particular part of the human anatomy. He refers to the legs and the legs alone and he says about capital head 85A that one leg consists of procurement of crops and distribution of crops and the other leg consists of a "Grow More Food" campaign. My honourable friend towards my left puts it to me that these two legs are on two different stools, and I do not understand what is meant either by procurement of foodgrains or by their distribution.

Sir, my honourable friend is very proud of the fact that large-scale trading transactions have been undertaken by Government for the promotion of healthier marketing conditions. My honourable friend there might just as well remember the famous picture of "Innocence" of Michael Angelo. The trading transactions referred to consist of mainly four items: (1) foodgrains other than wheat; (2) wheat; (3) subvention in the shape of concessions to Government employees, Civic Guards and the A.R.P.; (4) standard cloth, sugar and salt.

Last year, Sir, this capital blockhead appeared in the budget without any details whatsoever. I had the privilege to criticise the Finance Department and the Finance Minister because no details whatever were forthcoming in the budget and the Legislature was called upon by the Executive to pass a blank cheque. My honourable friend the present Finance Minister is familiar with blank cheques. The result has been as expected. Total capital spent on outlay on this scheme is 71 crores. The total sale proceeds have come up to 41 crores My honourable friend says that the stock in hand at the close of the year is 29 crores 75 lakhs and he calculated at one stage that the loss on account of deliberate depreciation is 3 crores and 50 lakhs. I must say here that my honourable friend's arithmetic was originally wrong. He has by way of postscript corrected himself because I find that the revised estimates disclose not a loss of 3 crores and 50 lakhs but a loss of 5 crores and 25 lakhs, and for the present year my honourable friend has budgeted for a possible loss of 5 crores and 60 lakhs on the basis of a capital outlay of 81 crores which is an absolute absurdity. It is a mythological proposition. We raised the point from the Opposition last year as to what became of the profits which either the Government of Bengal as a collegiate institution or individuals composing the Government of Bengal or individuals favoured by the Government of Bengal made on purchase from provinces other than Bengal, and we gave the estimate, an estimate which has never been denied in this province, that somebody, some person unknown, made a net profit of 75 lakhs of rupees. We wanted to know where the 75 lakhs of rupees went. The Hon'ble Minister in charge of Civil Supplies stoutly denied the correctness of the allegation made. Later on when the Government of India appeared on the scene a reluctant admission had to be made. Where is that profit shown in this budget which my honourable friend has presented to the Legislature? Sir, I am familiar with the colour of the budget. Red denotes battle; green indicates jealousy, but let white remain the emblem of purity. And, Sir, in the interests of the integrity of the Ministry, in the interests of honesty which must yet adhere to a begging and borrowing

province, it is absolutely essential that details should be given in the budget especially when allegations of a hard character like this are made by the Opposition.

Sir, the Department of Civil Supplies is in this budget seeking expansion, and the Hon'ble Finance Minister has made additional provision for Rs. 40 lakhs for the employment of the unemployed and he has made a further provision of Rs. 28 lakhs for the purpose of introducing ration scheme for Calcutta. Allegations of bribery, corruption, highhandedness (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: And nepotism.) and nepotism as my friend reminds me which are attendant upon State control in a country ruled and dominated like ours are rampant and in the interests of all details should be forthcoming at any rate in the green book, but they have not come.

Sir, my honourable friend says that between June and October loans and advances from the Central Government came up to the extent of Rs. 12 crores. Where are the figures between October and now? Or are there no figures? Or the letter which my honourable friend had despatched in November last to the Government of India begging for more money yet remains unanswered notwithstanding the pious hopes and holy beliefs of my friend the Hon'ble Finance Minister. Sir, he has taken into account Rs. 32 crores worth of Treasury Bills between November, 1943, and June, 1944. What about the rest of the year? Shall we then be regaled by another supplementary budget like this even under section 81 of the Government of India Act and shall we then have to witness the wonderful scene of the Chair being called upon either to rule that budget is out of order and bring a certain amount of choas or agree to the flouting of the Legislature and the Act which alone have the authority to grant expenditure for this province? Sir, my honourable friend in one of his speeches—his speeches are high-strung—stated that he had obtained from the Imperial Bank Rs. 16 crores for the purchase of 65 lakhs of maunds of *aus*. I made enquiries then whether the 65 lakhs of maunds represented paddy or rice. That enquiry was never answered, and the Hon'ble Civil Supplies Minister who probably does not live on paddy or rice being a member of the English Bar himself never condescended to give a reply. Sir, I now find from the speech of the Hon'ble Finance Minister that that statement was an overstatement. Tonight he says that on account of cash credit account the amount actually drawn for the purchase of *aus* crop was Rs. 2,21,00,000 and the account was repaid on the 31st December, 1943, at a time when Bengal was in the grip of the biggest famine that has been witnessed in the course of a century and a half. Why? My honourable friend brandishes before our eyes the prospect of a procurement scheme. Sir, I do not like this procurement of *aman* crop to the extent of Rs. 25 crores repayable by the 31st December, 1944. Sir, does the Rs. 25 crores proposed expenditure bear the same proportion to this Rs. 16 crores expenditure on account of the proposed purchase of *aus* crop? If 65 lakh maunds of paddy or rice were actually purchased by Government in September last when my honourable friend the Finance Minister's famous speech was delivered in the House, Bengal would not have witnessed the tragic, doleful and sorrowful spectacle in September, October, November and December, 1943. My

honourable friend, the Finance Minister, is very pleased that His Excellency Lord Wavell in the course of his multifarious activities found time to come to Bengal and see the distresses of Bengal. I hope my honourable friend had the benefit and the privilege of shaking hands with His Excellency; his hands are very strong.

Sir, my honourable friend perhaps rightly gave a testimonial to the Army. I do not think that the Army is in need of testimonials. It has been placed here for the discharge of certain obligations. It has rights, but it has obligations also to the province where it has been stationed.

Sir, may I make an enquiry of the Hon'ble Finance Minister regarding something about the grains purchase scheme? I would appeal to the members to read and re-read pages 452-456 of the big book. The big book is printed partly for the purpose of meeting the printing charges of the Government and partly perhaps faintly for enlightening an unenlightened public. There the cost of purchase in the budget for the coming year has been placed at Rs. 63 crores and 33 lakhs as against last year's account of Rs. 41 crores. Why? The Advances for the last year in the Revised Estimate came up to Rs. 14,69,00,000. In the budget the advance has been put down at Rs. 1,49,00,000. Again why? Is it because of dame rumour is dancing before the eyes of the Hon'ble Finance Minister? Sir, I should like to have an explanation from him if the Hon'ble Minister condescends to reply about the items "suspenses" and "personal deposit". The revised figures were Rs 25,59,00,000 as against the budget figures of Rs. 2,20,00,000. Why this gulf of more than Rs. 23 crores? (At this stage the blue light was lit, but the member was allowed to speak for five minutes more.)

Sir, losses have been incurred on account of these purchases. My honourable friend puts down the losses at one stage at Rs. 3,30,00,000 while the Revised Estimate discloses the figure Rs. 5,25,00,000 and the Budget Estimate at Rs. 5 crores and 60 lakhs. But losses on account of whom and on what? Losses on account of subvention granted to (1) Police—they always get subventions and in this very budget the Police expenditure has been increased without justification, (2) to the A.R.P. officials and (3) to Government servants. I find that the Budget figures of 1943-44 have wide variation with the revised estimates of the present year and my honourable friend has deliberately under-estimated the requirements for the budget year 1944-45. The revised estimates exceeded the budget figures on this account by more than Rs. 50 lakhs and poor Labour for whom crocodile tears always come from the Treasury Benches got the sum of Rs. 1,50,000. What an equitable distribution of concessions and subventions by a popularly constituted Government of Bengal!

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one could have spoken for a pretty long time over budget estimates like these. My honourable friend talks about Orphanage. The first Orphanage has been established at Berhampore. A good place! It has a wide reputation and two of my honourable friends on this side of the House belong to Berhampore. Whether they are orphans of the storm or they are orphans of the famine, I do not know. They will disclose soon what their views are about this point.

My honourable friend has not forgotten the Jute Mills. He has not forgotten the Sugar Mills as well. He has granted subvention to the Sugar Mills to the extent of four annas a maund ostensibly for the purpose of benefiting the cultivator but really for the purpose of seeing that more gin is produced for indirect purposes of war. I am very cautious in my statement.

The only two items which rivet my attention are the proposed expenditure of Rs. 12½ lakhs for the distribution of quinine and Rs. 14 lakhs for cholera and small-pox. As against these, the Jail expenditure has increased by Rs. 57 lakhs and the Police expenditure by Rs. 40 lakhs. Naturally my honourable friend requires this exhortation of a Trojan Leader to his harassed band and he quotes Latin so that we cannot understand that language.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: I have translated it.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Translations are good, but sometimes some people are translated. In the language of Shakespeare Bottom was translated indeed! Whether such translations are good, bad or indifferent, I leave to the judgment of the Hon'ble Finance Minister. I can only say this imitating him that his budget discloses not the address of the Trojan Leader, but the address of that soldier who stood on the ruins of Carthage and exclaimed:

So perished Troy with Priam, Lord of Priam's folk translated many centuries later in England—

"Rome shall perish (write that word),
In the blood that she has spilt,
Perish hopeless and abhorred;
Deep in ruin as in guilt."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hope my honourable friend has not forgotten the early years of his Horace and has meekly followed the policy laid down by Imperial Rome—

"Paquis que imponere morem
Subjectis et deballare superbos".

Mr. I. D. JALAN: Sir, in taking part in the general discussion of the Budget this afternoon I cannot but refer to the grievous death of Mrs. Gandhi who represented the soul of Indian womanhood. We belonging to the Congress Party in the Legislature cannot but feel the poignancy of the grief which has overtaken the greatest man of India today. He is lying in fetters for the emancipation of the country. It is regrettable what while we are considering the Budget today if we consider the broader aspects of this country we are far from achieving our goal for which we are striving at present. But I need not go into the political aspect of the question this afternoon, and I should like to confine my attention to the problem before us. There has been an increase in the expenditure in jails and in Police. When this Ministry came into power it was expected that they would take a more liberal policy towards the release of political prisoners but the result which we have seen is far away from the expectation that we had. Even now we feel that the rate of release of political prisoners is so slow that we do not quite know how long it will take for this Government to release them.

The Government could have relieved the congestion of the jails. They would have relieved a portion of the expenses on jails had they taken the course which they ought to have taken. It was expected of a Government which professes to be based on the popular franchise that they should rise and show greater strength in dealing with this problem and should not imitate the methods, principles and policies which the white bureaucracy followed when they were in power. The Government is following practically the same policy which their predecessors followed. This aspect of the question we cannot ignore because it touches the rights and liberties of the people for which the people fought for generations. You are detaining people without trial for an indefinite period and even in spite of the fact that the situation has considerably changed because it suits the policy of His Majesty's Government in Britain. But this is not what is expected of a Government which belongs to the people and which claims at least to represent a section of the people of this province. That is the first remark that I shall make in this Budget speech, viz., that Government should follow a more liberal policy in releasing the political prisoners and thus create an atmosphere in which the work may proceed smoothly and efficiently.

The next question which is before us is the food problem, which has been engaging the attention of this country for the last one year to a tremendous extent. The Government's primary duty was to see that not a single soul died of starvation in this province, but we find that in spite of the huge increase in the expenditure under the head "Extraordinary Charges" millions of people of this province have died an untimely death. So far as the policy of the Government is concerned, it has deeply affected the ordinary channels of economic type and it has very seriously interfered with the same. I do not for one moment deny that in extraordinary times like the present a certain amount of interference is desirable and necessary. What do we find? So far as the deaths of the people are concerned, they have occurred in millions. We are not going into the causes as to why these took place but this fact is quite apparent that so far as the Government's responsibility is concerned it has failed in spite of the huge expenditure which has been incurred in the Civil Supplies Department and in all other departments connected with it.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister has stated in his Budget speech that more than half the revenue is devoted to famine, extraordinary charges and the like, but still we find that there are grumblings. The Government has introduced rationing in Calcutta, but we find that the policy which the Government has enunciated is to deprive the local trade channels absolutely from participating in it. There were thousands of persons who were earning their livelihood by grocery business. But they have been absolutely deprived of their means of livelihood and new persons have been brought in and Government has taken upon itself the duties of distributing food articles to the people and thus increasing the cost by crores in this matter alone. I submit that Government should not deal with this problem in the way in which it has dealt with it. So far as trade and commerce is concerned, you have got to depend on them and the present misery is attributable to the wrong policy of Government which the Government has been following for some time past. So far as rationing is concerned we find complaints everywhere that the ration which is supplied is not of good quality. It has been

brought out from the old stocks of rice which are sometimes uneatable. When the ordinary trade of the country could supply *atap* and boiled fine as well as course rice according to the requirements of the consuming public, there is no reason why Government with all its elaborate equipments fails to supply the necessary requirements. So far as expenditure is concerned, Government should investigate into the actual expenditure in connection with the rationing scheme and also see how far those expenses can be reduced I find there is a good deal of extravagance in this department apart from nepotism, corruption and jobbery and such other charges which have been levelled against it. So far as Government is concerned it has got to look to the present condition of the people before proceeding to levy fresh taxes. Now we find that the Government has increased the Sales Tax to double of what it was before and it has now brought forward a Bill for taxing the agricultural income. Still there is a deficit of more than Rs. 10 crores for which no provision has been made. Sir, under the pretext of combating inflation taxes after taxes are being imposed and people are being overburdened with them while on the other hand no efforts are being made to minimise the costs of the new departments which have been brought into existence. These enormous costs and the present attitude of the Government are highly unjustifiable. Times without number enquiries have been set on foot in order to find out as to how far expenses can be curtailed in the ordinary or normal departments of Government, but so far we have never heard as to what should be the extent of retrenchment in the departments which have been newly created in order to meet the new situation So far as the Government is concerned it owes its duty to the people to spend as little as possible and to burden the people with as little taxation as possible. That should be the policy for the Government to follow, but I regret to find that that policy is not manifest in the Budget which the Government has presented to this House in this session.

Maharaja SRISCHANDRA NANDY, of Cossimbazar: Sir, as I was listening to the learned statement of my honourable friend, the Finance Minister, I was reminded of a famous character in one of Moliere's plays, who was amazed to find that he had been speaking prose all his life without knowing it. The tragedy is that he is still blissfully unaware of the deplorable results of inaction or misapplied activities of his Government, as indicated by the illuminating figures of the Budget He is still complacent and talks in a light-hearted manner about the use of taxation as an "engine of social and national policy", and moreover he is also pleased to look forward to the building up of a better world for ourselves. Sir, this is a serious threat indeed!

Let us examine some of the figures in the ponderous budget volumes and try to find out how far this Government has given a good account of itself as an engine of social and national policy. Nearly half of the enormous amounts scheduled for expenditure during the two years 1943-45 is accounted for by three heads which are rather significant and have intimate connections with what they call "war conditions". These heads are "Extraordinary charges in India", "Famine" and "Agriculture" and account for an amount which easily exceeds the abnormal figure of Rs. 30 crores in round numbers. How has this amount been spent or is proposed to be spent in the interest of vital social and national policies?

Sir, under the head "Extraordinary Charges in India" the outstanding items that come out are civil defence, the cost of the Civil Supplies Department, and the losses incurred by the Government on what they call "trading operations". I do not propose to dwell at length on these losses of the trading operations of the Government which have been put by the Hon'ble Minister at the modest figures of Rs. 3½ crores and Rs. 5 crores for 1943-44 and 1944-45 respectively. The Hon'ble Minister as a matter of fact finds a great source of consolation and perhaps strength in them, for he says that Government's loss in this regard "will be the measure of the success" of these vital operations. But his uneasy conscience speaks out when he says that the tax-payer might look askance at this loss of 5 crores if the Government's operations did not ensure a healthy check on the rise of the food prices. The average tax-payer will judge Government policy by results, and certainly not by the profession or quotations from the scriptures. We have had more than a year of this food crisis amidst us, and the policy of price control has had its run for much more than this period. Where do we stand now as regards the price of paddy and rice? According to the statements issued by the Government the ceiling price in respect of rice is Rs. 15 (for wholesalers) and Rs. 8-8 for paddy (agriculturists). Assuming that this price is now effective, we can see that this ruling price is still much beyond the purchasing power of the poorer classes, this price being higher by more than 300 per cent of the pre-war figures.

Then, Sir, I am not very much sure whether a good portion of this loss could not have been prevented from arising, if instead of depending on purchasing agents, the Government themselves assumed responsibility for procurement as well as distribution. Up till now no satisfactory account has yet been made available to us about the working of these purchasing firms, and how Government control over their purchasing activities in mofussil was exercised and made effective. There was for example a wide complaint about artificially boosting up food prices in the mofussil as a result of the operation of these purchasing agents. Even the Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy was responsible for a statement at Dacca that he would not allow prices to come down much further, as the cultivating classes would not then get a "fair" price. What the tax-payer wants to be sure about is, whether the experiences of the last year are going to be repeated once again. Sir, this solicitude for the masses should better be left over for the time being. In Bengal we have had a very nasty experience last year. When an entire nation was starving and people were dying in thousands for want of food, the Government was still complacently relying on the policy of doles through the mockery of the so-called "controlled" shops, and at the same time allowing its purchasing agents to roam about the homes of the poor peasants and manipulate the food prices with a view to build profit for themselves. The Government silently stood by and would not assume responsibility for finding food for the suffering millions. Even today we find that our Government required a directive from the Central Government to introduce rationing in Calcutta and the neighbouring industrial areas. We are still in doubts about the prospects in the mofussil. Evidently it would not be prudent for us to wait for a further directive from the Centre. The prime necessity is to build up confidence in the mofussil and will it be too much to expect the Government to show some initiative on their own account

and prove that they are really serious about the welfare of the masses of Bengal, by assuming responsibility. As I said, Sir, we judge the Government by results. I do not care whether there is a theoretical food surplus in this province. I do not care whether hoarders and profiteers have formed a conspiracy to nullify the beneficient intentions of the Government. Nor do I care whether the claims of the Government about the effectiveness of the price-control measures is correct or not. What I do care is whether food is made available to all at a price within their reach. If there is a single soul today in Bengal who is starving for want of food, that is sufficiently scandalous for any civilised Government to function and frame its budget with high-sounding phrases. This is a sacred task, and there must not be any manœuvring of position, political twisting or the hackneyed theoretical claims and counter-claims.

Sir, nearabout six crores of rupees have been budgeted for relief operations under the various headings. This is essentially humanitarian and a good deal of praise is due to the army and the civilian officials who have taken their duties fairly seriously. As we have been told, Rs. 3½ crores is chargeable to gratuitous relief and 1½ crores to test works. A word of criticism is necessary in respect of the supply of cooked food from the free kitchens. In this respect the Government should have the assistance of a nutrition board consisting of experts in the line, so as to help in the selection of a well-balanced dietatic formula suitable for the people for whom these free kitchens were meant. In view of the restrictions imposed by rationing in city and industrial areas, there should also be a well-directed propaganda about the nutritive value of the various articles of diet. We should realise that in such technical matters, a mere statement from the Hon'ble Ministers would not be sufficient; if the services of dietatic experts are requisitioned for the purpose, that would certainly be more convincing.

While on this subject of relief operations, I think the Government should realise that it is the non-official relief organisations who did the pioneering work, and when the Government entered the field they found a good volume of humanitarian work already done by these relief organisations. The policy of the Government had been to help these relief organisations only to a very limited extent, and their assistance in most cases was limited to supplies of foodgrains at subsidised rates. From my own experience of relief work in Murshidabad district, I could not help having the impression that the Government did not seem to favour very much any non-official relief works. I do not know whether this attitude of the Government is due to an anxiety to cover up their deficiency in the line.

Sir, I welcome very much the provision of a crore and a quarter of rupees on test relief works. As the Hon'ble Minister points out, these have been so designed as to improve communications, drainage and irrigation facilities. Evidently these have been so framed as to help in the Grow More Food Campaign. I wish this provision has been considerably increased and visibly linked with the plan for Post-War Rehabilitation of agriculture and industries in Bengal.

Sir, all through the statement of the Hon'ble Minister I have searched in vain for any comprehensive planning in respect of the problem of food, famine and agriculture, which undeniably constitute the crux of the defence situation. While measures are necessary for the immediate alleviation of

the present distress, these measures must inevitably form the part of a continuous programme, leading us from short-term measures to long-term planning. You cannot ask a nation to live on the begging bowl and neighbourly charities. Hence to convert the present distressing spectacle of gratuitous relief, the relief measures must be so devised as to lead the nation towards a definite rehabilitation of our economic life on sure and sound foundations. I know, Sir, that a Post-War Reconstruction Committee has been constituted in Bengal, but I do not see why in Bengal we should depend on the initiative from the Government of India and waste valuable time in deliberations.

This lack of comprehensive planning and the absence of any correlation of the various measures to deal with famine, food, and agriculture is really deplorable, and will moreover, I am afraid, lead to further wastage of our energy and efforts. Take for example, Sir, the Grow More Food Drive. This drive has been undertaken here at the initiative of the Government of India, and has so far been confined to propaganda and publicity and distribution of improved seeds. The provision for 1943-44 is 1 crore 35 lakhs, and for 1944-45, only Rs. 50 lakhs. The provision has been for short-term improvement of agriculture, and there is evidently no scheme to continue the programme in a progressive manner. Moreover there is no provision for capital improvement of agriculture nor is there any scheme for the same. Any scheme for agricultural improvement must provide for sufficient credit facilities to the agriculturists, and in this regard the significant omission of any scheme for the improvement of co-operative societies is really to be deplored. Government should have been aware that thanks to their enthusiastic policy of debt redemption and conciliation, and the operation of the Bengal Agricultural Debtors Act and Bengal Money-lenders Act, a void has been created in the rural areas, drying up all sources of credit. Up till now nothing has been done to improve the situation, and not even the wide devastations of the food crisis could have roused them to their sense of responsibility in this regard.

Sir, under Irrigation, the only big increase in expenditure arises out of the provision of Rs. 109 lakhs for the repair of the Damodar embankment breached by the last year's flood. Though this has been taken up on the initiative of the Government of India which have agreed to make an interest-free advance in the interest of maintaining vital arterial lines of communication, many of us at this side of the House would question the wisdom of pushing on an embankment scheme once again. Probably a better course should have been to push the Damodar-Hooghly-Howrah Scheme with its scheme of reservoirs in the upper catchment areas in Bihar, particularly when the Irrigation Department has a ready scheme in this regard for the permanent solution of the problem.

Sir, we are having a huge expenditure at the scale of Rs. 31 crores a year. And naturally the poor resources of this province have not been able to cope with the situation, and we are heading for deficits which by all tokens are rather alarming. The Finance Minister states that he hopes to raise during the current and the next financial years Rs. 10 crores more revenue than was raised in the two preceding years. Evidently he has some more taxes in view including the recent enhancement of the Sales Tax, and the proposed Agricultural Income-tax. Apart from the wisdom of imposing fresh taxes

in this over-taxed province, passing through unprecedented famine conditions, there is the fact that a deficit accumulating at the rate of Rs. 17 crores and odd in two years can hardly be wiped out by proceeds of new taxes. The remedy certainly lies in other directions. We agree with the Hon'ble Finance Minister when he says that the limits of the Niemeyer Award must be widened in the interest of doing financial justice to Bengal. Then again, Sir, there is the wider question of the Centre bearing its legitimate share of the extraordinary demands on the Bengal Exchequer, which are definitely attributable to the War and War conditions. I hope that the Finance Minister will be able to convince the Central Government about the justice of this demand, and succeed in drawing a much-needed relief to the burden imposed on our poor shoulders.

Sir, unless we move in the right direction and take more energetic steps, I do not find much to enthuse about in this budget, and this, in spite of the "Trojan Leader and his harassed band" in our midst

Mr. D. CLADDING: In his very able Budget statement, clear of pattern and worded with charm, the Hon'ble Mr Goswami has presented us with the most distressing estimates that have ever claimed the attention of this House. Despite bumper revenues, attributable to war conditions and to new taxes which we have imposed, those same war conditions, and especially a "famine" brought about by them, have forced expenditure to such a pitch that our financial position is broken beyond the remedy of any action which we can in fairness be asked to take. The remedy must come from outside; and that is the point to which, with my Party's permission, I shall devote the bulk of my time this afternoon.

The revenues for the two years with which we are immediately dealing are placed by Mr. Goswami at the bumper figures of 21·34 crores and 21·97 crores, each of which is approximately 5 crores, or more than 33 per cent., higher than the revenue of 1942-43. It is my belief that even these figures are under-estimates. I think they will be greater by about half a crore in the current year and by at least a crore in 1944-45, under the heads income-tax, excise, stamps and "other taxes and duties," altogether apart from the new yield of approximately 1 crore which is expected to come from the Bill to amend the Sales Tax and the Bill to impose an Agricultural Income-tax which are down to be enacted at this session. The revenue expenditure is placed higher than the expected receipts by the ugly amounts of 11·1/5 crores this year and 8½ crores next year. These, alas, in our opinion are also likely to prove to be under-estimates. Mr Goswami has himself admitted that they may be under-estimates. The main field in which our doubts arise is Government's commercial operations in foodgrains, sugar, salt and standard cloth, and in the establishment side of those operations; regarding which there is not as much detailed information in the Red Book as we should have liked to see. The doubts we have, and the advice we wish to offer, in these connections will be mentioned by later speakers from these benches. I will leave it at that, and pass on to my main subject.

Now, Sir, I want to give you our total war-time figures, and to draw some points from them. They are most dramatic. What will our total

revenue be for the six years following 1938-39, taking Mr. Goswami's figures for this year and next? No less than Rs. 104,78,39,000, as follows:—

	Rs.
1939-40	14,31,66,000
1940-41	13,54,50,000
1941-42	14,94,28,000
1942-43	16,46,42,000
1943-44	22,44,09,000
1944-45	23,07,44,000

Please note, Sir, that this sum is greater than six times the revenue of 1938-39 *by 28 crores*

Now take our revenue *expenditure* for the same six years. That will add up to the much greater sum of Rs. 1,23,43,39,000, as follows:—

	Rs.
1939-40	13,71,24,000
1940-41	14,45,39,000
1941-42	15,50,38,000
1942-43	16,79,00,000
1943-44	32,53,60,000
1944-45	30,43,78,000

While our revenue *receipts*, therefore, will be greater by 28 crores than they would have been if we had continued to have the revenue of 1938-39, they will be *less by 18 crores 65 lakhs* than our revenue expenditure during the same period A pretty state of affairs!

Now let us suppose that Bengal had not been visited by the "famine". In 1941-42, which was before our expenditure on food shortage began, but included expenditure on civil defence, dearness allowances, etc., our expenditure was 15½ crores Had the "famine" not occurred, I think our unavoidable expenditure for the subsequent three years (1942-45) might have been kept within an average of, say, 17 crores per annum instead of the 15½ crores of 1941-42. In that event, our total unavoidable expenditure during these six years would have been 94 crores 67 lakhs; or *10 crores less than our total receipts.* With that 10 crores we should have been able to give some easement here and there in the nation-building departments; but, *best of all,* we should have been able to set aside many crores for *post-war reconstruction.* The gap between these two figures—a deficit of 18 crores 65 lakhs instead of a surplus of 10 crores—is the measure of the terrible burden which has been placed on Bengal by calamity, born of the war, which Bengal was helpless to prevent. Please note that I say "helpless to prevent". Unlike many critics who have been airing their views both outside and inside Bengal, I believe that that calamity and the consequent expenditure were, in all their dimensions that matter, beyond local prevention

Now, Sir, the contention of everybody in this House is that Bengal should not be made to carry the burden of the figures which I have given: the burden, I mean, of being 18 crores 65 lakhs down, instead of something like 10 crores up, over the first six years of this war. It is preposterous that the war and its consequences should be allowed to impoverish some provinces while they enrich others. Burdens such as the one now being carried by Bengal should be a charge upon the whole of the body politic, just as they

would have been if the country had not been divided into several provinces with separate responsibilities and separate powers of raising supplies and appropriating them. If you will cast your mind back, Sir, to the last war, you will find, if I remember aright, that in those days the whole of the revenues of India accrued to the Centre and appropriation, province by province, was sanctioned by the Centre on the basis of demands sent in by the Secretariats of each province. This illustrates what I mean, and suggests the thought that the financial machinery of those days was more serviceable to an India at war than is the financial machinery of today. Some compromise between what I may call the financial communism of those days and the financial isolationism encouraged by the present constitution seems clearly to be called for; and, I prophesy that we shall see it happen, in some shape or other. How the uneven burden of Bengal is to be carried elsewhere is not for me to suggest: responsible men at the Centre should work that out, and should face any music that may be involved. But it leaps to the eye that the alternatives are roughly three: it can either be taken by the Centre and passed on by the Centre, through Central taxes, to the whole tax-paying public of India, or it can be made a charge on a special pool got by taking a levy from those provincial exchequers which have disproportionate surpluses, or it can be absorbed by a mixture of both methods. I leave the matter at that.

I gather that what the Centre have been trying to maintain is that Bengal's burden should, at any rate in large part, be borne by Bengal itself and spread over many years to come by the device of raising loans, either from the Centre or from the public. To agree to this would be to give away our whole case, *and we must not agree to it*. An alternative seems to be that the Centre may be offering us loans for the time being, with a rider that their eventual fate (whether they are to remain as loans or to be wiped out, in whole or in part, by a subsidy) will be left over for decision at some future date. I hope I am not wronging the Government of India when I ask the Finance Minister to beware of such a plan. To get a fair settlement in retrospect, when our budgets are balancing or are in surplus, will be next to impossible; and to defer the matter now, in a kind of escapist spirit, will lay up trouble for the future between the Bengal and Central Governments that will do immeasurable harm. We should insist on a decision *now* which either makes equitable subventions (*not* loans) immediately available or fixes acceptable principles on which subventions, putting the province fully on its feet like other provinces, will be made as soon as the war is over.

Ever since our troubles began, the Centre has demanded that we do our best to help ourselves, by way of increased provincial taxation. This Party has supported that demand, and the response of the province, as Mr. Goswami argued, has been considerable. Of the increase in revenue of 9½ crores in 1943-44 over the revenue before the war began, 1¾ crores is the yield of taxes newly imposed or increased by us; and this will rise to 3 crores in 1944-45 when we have passed the two taxation measures which are down for disposal at this session. *This 3 crores will be equal to 25 per cent. of our whole revenues in 1938-39.* We have also starved nation-building departments and diverted taxes from purposes for which they were intended to be ear-marked. Mr. Goswami has hinted, rather cryptically, at further taxation still. The European Party will give a sympathetic hearing to any further taxation

proposals that may be shown to be justified. But before we make up our minds whether justification has been established, we shall want to know what the Government of India, on their part, have done, or have undertaken to do, by way of giving this province a fair deal.

As a matter of interest, I have tried to add up what the Centre has already done by way of financial relief to us, under specific heads, since the war began, including the figures for this year and next given in these estimates. I make it 11½ crores in the form of *grants* (10 crores under civil defence, 119 lakhs under extra police for quasi-central purposes, 20 lakhs in full payment for repairing the Amirpur breach and 16 lakhs for "Grow More Food"); and 2 crores in the form of *loans* (1 crore 9 thousand for the Damodar embankment and 88 lakhs for "Grow More Food"). We acknowledge these aids with thanks, as also the wonderful work done by the Army, for which Mr. Goswami has paid so deserved a tribute to His Excellency, Lord Wavell; but we ask for very much more, and we should be happy to think that His Excellency the Viceroy is already, or will soon be, in personal contact with our financial file in Delhi. Who knows? Perhaps there will be some good news for this province, if not for the man in the street, in Sir Jeremy Raisman's Budget speech a few days hence

Sir, it is late in the evening and I will now resume my seat. Before I do so, let me say again that the welfare of Bengal for very many years to come is at stake: that we have *a cast-iron case;* and that Mr. Goswami and his colleagues have our best wishes in the fight which, with the assistance of our distinguished new Governor, they are doubtless going to put up. Mr Goswami concluded with a Latin quotation. So will I. I say to him—

"*Tu ne cede malis, sed contra auditior ito*".

Which, in the present context, may be interpreted to mean—

"Don't give in to Delhi; run up to the pitch, and knock them for six".

Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned at 6-40 p.m. till 4-45 p.m., on Friday, the 25th February, 1944, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Friday, the 25th February, 1944, at 4-45 p.m.

Present:

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY) in the Chair, 9 Hon'ble Ministers and 168 members.

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Strike by warders of Bengal Jails.

***112. SJ. KHAGENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the warders of different jails in Bengal went on strike by the middle of January, 1943?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) the number of warders involved; and

(*ii*) the number of jails that were affected?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be also pleased to state whether these warders before going on strike had submitted several petitions bringing their grievances relating to pay, dearness allowance, residence, time of duty, etc., to the notice of the authorities?

(*d*) If the answer to (*c*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps have been taken in the matter?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): During the middle of January there was for a short period in 16 jails or sub-jails a concerted abstention from duty on the part of some warders whose numbers are not readily available. This action appears to have been adopted in order to draw Government's attention to a number of representations as regards pay and allowances, conditions of service, etc., which were then under consideration by the Inspector-General of Prisons and Government.

Government have already extended certain concessions, *viz.*, dearness allowance, supply of basic rations at concession rates and Emergency Areas bonus to the warders and certain other grievances are under further consideration. At this stage the Home Minister does not consider it to be in the public interest to make any further statement.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any warders had been prosecuted in connection with this strike?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the amount of dearness allowance granted to jail warders?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Dearness allowance and after that a supplementary dearness allowance had been sanctioned by Government on the 13th January they are aggregating to Rs. 10 or more in the case of assistant jailers and sub-jailers and Rs 7-8 in the case of others.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: What is the amount granted to jail warders?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Rs 7-8

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Apart from prosecution, has there been any other kind of victimisation of the jail warders?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: There has been no victimisation.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what has been done about their residence, time of duty, etc.?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That is under the consideration of Government

Forcibly taking away of cash and cheque, etc., by Negro soldiers from a shop at Rajganj, Comilla.

***113. Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that—

(*i*) towards the end of December, 1943, some Negro soldiers entered into the shop of Messrs. Ray Mohan Modak at Rajganj and took away cigarettes without making any payment;

(*ii*) the Negro soldiers entered into the cloth shop "Sankar Bastralaya" and forcibly rifted the cash box and took away Rs 212-4 in cash and a cheque of Rs.2,600;

(*iii*) the Traders' Association met in a meeting and passed resolutions that shops in the town of Comilla would remain closed after 6 p.m. since 29th December, 1943, till further decision;

(*iv*) the Secretary of the Association informed the District Magistrate of the incidents that had happened; and

(*v*) there were other stray cases of violence and looting by the Negro soldiers in the streets of the town of Comilla?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) (*iv*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether the Magistrate made any enquiries into the allegations made therein; and

(*ii*) if so, whether he found the allegations to be true?

(*c*) If the answer to (*b*) (*ii*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps the District Magistrate had taken—

(*i*) to bring the offenders to book; and

(*ii*) to prevent the recurrence of such incidents?

(*d*) Is it a fact that the Hon'ble Minister has been informed of the incidents by a letter written by a member, Bengal Legislative Assembly, representing Tippera (General) Constituency?

(*e*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps he has taken in the matter?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) (*i*) The incident was reported to the local officer. A claim for compensation is being considered

(*ii*) to (*iv*) and (*d*) Yes.

(*v*) Reports were received of two other incidents on the 26th and 30th December, 1943.

(*b*) (*i*) No separate enquiry was ordered but the cases reported to the Police were at once investigated.

(*ii*) The incidents investigated by the police were found to be true.

(*c*) The army was found perfectly co-operative and offered every facility for test identification. Neither witnesses nor complainants could identify the offenders at the test identification parade. The difficulty of identification has been the obstacle to formal prosecution

The military authorities put the bazar out of bounds to West African troops after the hours of 6-30 p.m. This order is still in force. The military police have orders to enforce this order strictly. An armed police patrol was instituted from 1st January, 1944.

(*e*) No further trouble has been reported by the District Magistrate and no further action on the part of Government is required in view of the action taken by the military and the local officers.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us when the identification parade took place?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice about the date.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the number of cases reported to the police?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That has been mentioned and in addition two other incidents were reported that took place on the 26th and 30th of December, 1943.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the number of cases that were reported to the District Magistrate?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that in spite of the fact that the military authorities put the bazar out of bounds to West African troops, they disobeyed the order?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: They did on one particular occasion but after that the military authorities took proper steps and since then there has been no report of any fresh occurrence of that kind.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: In view of the answer that the incidents were found to be true and that no further trouble has been reported and no further action is required, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the army authorities were asked to find out the culprit for themselves?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I have already stated that the army authorities were found perfectly co-operative and offered every facility and all possible help to the police officers in conducting the investigation but in spite of that neither the army authorities nor the police officers could find out the culprits.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us whether a scheme for compensation is being considered by the military or by the local authorities?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: By the local authorities.

Recall of Bengal Indian Civil Service Officers.

***114. Rai Bahadur JOGESH CHANDRA SEN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) the reason why the Bengal I.C.S. officers have been recalled from Government of India Service;

(*b*) what is the number of such officers; and

(*c*) where they have been posted, mentioning their names and designations?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) To strengthen the administration in view of the abnormal situation in Bengal and to meet the demands of the newly created Civil Supplies Department.

(*b*) Twelve.

(*c*) A statement is laid on the Table.

Statement referred to in reply to clause (c) of starred question No. 114.

List of Bengal I.C.S. officers recalled from the Government of India.

	Name.	Designation.	Station.	Remarks.
1.	Mr. S. N. Roy (II), I.C.S.	Financial Adviser, Department of Civil Supplies	Calcutta.	
2.	Mr. K. G. Morshed, I.C.S.	. .	. . .	He has not joined service in Bengal as he is on medical leave.
3.	Mr. H. Tufnell-Barrett, C.I.E., I.C.S.	Second Additional Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Home Department, and Civil Representative of the Government of Bengal with the Headquarters, Eastern Army, and also Provincial Press Adviser, Bengal	Calcutta.	
4.	Mr. S. Basu, O.B.E., I.C.S.	Secretary, Agriculture and Co-operative Credit and Rural Indebtedness Departments	Do.	He joined service in Bengal but is now on medical leave.
5.	Mr. B. B. Sarkar, I.C.S.	Magistrate and Collector, Murshidabad	Berhampore.	
6.	Mr. M. Worth, I.C.S.	Additional District Magistrate, 24 Parganas	Alipore	He joined service in Bengal but is now on medical leave.
7.	Mr. W. A. S. Lewis, O.B.E., I.C.S.	Deputy Director of Civil Supply, Region VII	Calcutta.	
8.	Mr. W. H. Saumarez Smith, M.B.E., I.C.S.	Magistrate and Collector, Malda	Malda	
9.	Mr. M. Ahmed, I.C.S.	Deputy Controller of Procurement and Purchase, Department of Civil Supply	Calcutta.	
10.	Mr. A. Wooller, I.C.S.	Deputy Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Department of Civil Supply	Do.	
11.	Mr. Aga Hilaly, I.C.S.	Deputy Controller of Procurement and Purchase, Department of Civil Supply	Do.	
12.	Mr. J. Saddler, I.C.S.	Additional Deputy Director of Civil Supply, Region V	Chandpur.	

Mr. ADWAITA KUMAR MAJI: মাননীয় মন্ত্রীমহাশয় দয়া করে বলবেন কি যে Mr. Brownকে যে বর্দ্ধমান জেলার কাল্না মহকুমায় Subdivisional Officer নিযুক্ত করা হয়েছে, তিনি Bihar থেকে কেন এসেছেন ?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That question strictly does not arise, but, as it has been already announced, some officers have been placed at the disposal of the Government of Bengal because there is a shortage of officers in this province and that is why some officers have been lent to the Government of Bengal and Major Brown is one of them.

Motor accidents in Calcutta and Howrah between March and June, 1943.

***115. Mr. KAMAL KRISHNA ROY:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state separately for the months of March, April, May and June, 1943—

(*i*) the total number of motor accidents in the cities of Calcutta and Howrah;

(*ii*) how many of them were from military lorries and cars;

(*iii*) the number of the injured persons mentioning separately the minor and major injuries,

(*iv*) the number of the instantaneous deaths that occurred from such motor accidents during the period;

(*v*) the total number of deaths from such accidents in the period; and

(*vi*) how many of them were admitted to hospitals giving the names of the hospitals?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether there is any speed limit for military motor cars running in Calcutta?

(*c*) If the answer to (*b*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) the speed limit per hour; and

(*ii*) whether it is being observed?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) A statement is laid on the Table

(*b*) and (*c*) The maximum speed limits of motor vehicles have been prescribed in the eighth schedule appended to the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939.

Military vehicles are not exempted from the operation of this Act.

Statement referred to in reply to clause (a) of starred question No. 115.

The total number of motor accidents in Calcutta and Howrah from March, 1943 and June, 1943.

Serial No.	Names of month with year.	Total number of motor accidents.	Total number of accidents caused by military lorries and cars	Number of injured persons with minor injuries.	Number of injured persons with major injuries.	Number of instantaneous deaths that occurred from such accidents.	Total number of deaths from such accidents.	Names of hospitals where the injured persons were admitted.	
1	March, 1943 ..	414	134	236	64	2	7	M. C. Hospital ..	10
								C. M. C. Hospital ..	12
								Mayo Hospital ..	4
								Campbell Hospital ..	4
								Marwari Hospital ..	1
								Calcutta Medical School ..	4
								N. S. Hospital ..	1
								S. N. P. Hospital ..	1
								Howrah General Hospital ..	2
2	April, 1943	489	152	287	72	6	9	N. S. Hospital ..	2
								M. C. Hospital ..	13
								C. M. C. Hospital ..	15
								Mayo Hospital ..	4
								Campbell Hospital ..	7
								Calcutta Medical School ..	3
								S. N. P. Hospital ..	2
								Howrah General Hospital ..	2
3	May, 1943	490	164	298	74	6	19	N. S. Hospital ..	3
								M. C. Hospital ..	14
								C. M. C. Hospital ..	14
								Mayo Hospital ..	4
								Campbell Hospital ..	5
								Calcutta Medical School ..	3
								P. G. Hospital ..	1
								S. N. P. Hospital ..	7
								Howrah General Hospital ..	3
4	June, 1943 ..	534	205	297	94	12	14	N. S. Hospital ..	3
								M. C. Hospital ..	11
								C. M. C. Hospital ..	13
								Mayo Hospital ..	4
								Campbell Hospital ..	4
								Calcutta Medical School ..	2
								S. N. P. Hospital ..	3
								Howrah General Hospital ..	1

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how many drivers of the military lorries have been punished?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: There were in—

	Prosecutions.	Military.	Convictions.
March	15	2	4
April	35	2	9
May	27	3	9
June	31	3	3

These refer to Calcutta. So far as Howrah is concerned, 24 prosecutions were launched, 2 military and convictions nil.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state definitely how many drivers of military lorries alone were prosecuted and as a result of that prosecution, they were punished, without mixing them up with the civil?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I have given extensive details—in March 2, April 2, May 3 and June 3 in Calcutta.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: I want convictions and not prosecutions.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice about that. I have given a consolidated list of prosecutions and convictions.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why the number of prosecutions has been so small in comparison with the number of accidents?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Because the culprits in some cases were not detected and in some cases they were only accidents and no culpable negligence could be held against the drivers.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that military lorry drivers pass off violating the traffic rules and in spite of their good intentions, the traffic police find themselves helpless to prevent them?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That used to be so some time ago and complaints were received by Government, but Government sought the co-operation of the military authorities and the military police and then they started patrolling the danger zones. As a result of that, 200 cases were detected as far as the Calcutta area is concerned and after the enforcement of these restrictions and this vigilance, there has been a lesser number of accidents.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that these military vehicles possess big and peculiar numbers and it is difficult for the traffic police to note down the numbers?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: In some cases, that was the cause of the culprit having escaped.

Mr. DEBENDRA LAL KHAN: The Hon'ble Minister stated that these were about the Calcutta area. What about the mofussil area where accidents are so rampant?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That is not covered by this question. The particulars asked for were with regard to Calcutta and Howrah.

Mr. P. BANERJI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how many prosecutions were there for exceeding the speed limit of 20 miles per hour in the town of Calcutta?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government is aware of the fact that these military lorries violate all light restrictions and create a position which makes it dangerous for other people to drive cars at night time?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I have already stated that the traffic police experienced some difficulty in dealing with the military offenders, but with the co-operation of the military police and the military authorities it has now been possible to reduce these breaches of motor vehicles rules.

Mr. P. BANERJI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that in all cases the military vehicles exceed the speed limit and run at a speed of more than 20 miles in Calcutta?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I have already explained that it used to be in some cases, but the number has now come down because in all places where usually military lorries and military vehicles ply, there has been regular and strict patrolling.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: With regard to light restrictions will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to consider the desirability of issuing a notice so that these military lorries stop their lights which are focussed from above to create something like dazzled light on the eyes of the people who go by cars?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: If by focussing from above the honourable member means that the headlights are not screened properly——

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: I mean the light above on the top.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: You mean spot-light?

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: অতখানি মাথার উপর থেকে (pointing above his head) যে torch light ফেলে সে সম্বন্ধে আমি বল্‌ছি।

(No reply.)

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Sir, I find the figures of accidents from March to June, 1943, but the Parliamentary Secretary has said that there has been a recent reduction of accidents. Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what are the figures according to his information of accidents after June till today?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Security prisoners Maulvi Ashrafuddin Ahmed Choudhury and Babu Ashutosh Sinha.

*116. **Mr. MAQBUL HOSSAIN:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state—

(i) whether Maulvi Ashrafuddin Ahmed Choudhury; and

(ii) Babu Ashutosh Sinha, B.L., of Comilla, are detained as security prisoners?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) the name of the jail where they are lodged at present;

(*ii*) their weight at the time of their arrest;

(*iii*) their present weight; and

(*iv*) whether they have been granted any family allowances?

(*c*) If the answer to (*b*)(*iv*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the respective amount granted?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) (*i*) Buxa Special Reserve Jail.

(*ii*) Babu Ashutosh Sinha—111 lbs.

Maulvi Ashrafuddin Ahmed Choudhury—137 lbs.

(*iii*) 113 lbs.

141 lbs.

(*iv*) and (*c*) A family allowance of Rs.50 per mensem has been sanctioned to Babu Ashutosh Sinha for the support of his wife and mother. No petition with this object has been received from Maulvi Ashrafuddin Ahmed Choudhury.

Babu NARENDRA NARAYAN CHAKRABARTY: মন্ত্রীমহাশয় দয়া করে জানাবেন কি যে মৌলবী আশ্‌রাফউদ্দিন আহমদ চৌধুরী ও বাবু আশুতোষ সিংহ কোন বৎসর ধৃত হয়েছিলেন ?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: In 1942.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that Babu Ashutosh Sinha besides his wife and mother has got a large number of children?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That I am not aware of.

Babu NARENDRA NARAYAN CHAKRABARTY: যে সময় তিনি ধৃত হয়েছিলেন সে সময় তিনি কি পারিবারিক ভাতার জন্য কোন রকম আবেদন করেছিলেন. এবং সে সময় তাঁকে কি ভাতা দেওয়া হয়েছিল ?

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: On a point of order. Supplementary questions according to rules and practice must relate to the questions which are already in the printed form.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: He was making enquiries of dates and times of prehistoric conditions.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your question, Mr. Chakrabarty?

Babu NARENDRA NARAYAN CHAKRABARTY: আমার প্রশ্ন হোলো, Sir, এই—বাবু আশুতোষ সিংহ যে সময় ধৃত হয়েছিলেন সে সময় তিনি পারিবারিক ভাতার জন্য কোনও রকম আবেদন করেছিলেন কি না।

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is quite in order.

Mr. A. M. A. ZAMAN: On a point of order, Sir, আমি জানতে চাই এই কথাটা যে উনি যে বিষয়টা জিজ্ঞাসা করছেন ঐ বিষয়টা question করা যেতে পারে কি না ?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is no point of order. Yes, Khan Bahadur.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Babu Ashutosh Sinha applied for family allowance and on the 1st May, 1942, a sum of Rs. 25 per month was granted to him which was subsequently enhanced on the 1st April, 1943 to Rs. 35 per month and then it was again enhanced on the 18th August, 1943 to Rs. 50 per month.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether these increments are due to the *tadbir* of Babu Narendra Narayan Chakrabarty? (Laughter.)

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Mr. Chakrabarty takes a good deal of interest in security prisoners.

Grant of facilities to convicted prisoners for filing appeal, by Superintendent, Alipore Central Jail.

***117. Mr. HARIPADA CHATTAPADHYAY:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether the Superintendent of the Alipore Central Jail informed the prisoners of that jail (specially Division III prisoners who have no access to newspapers) convicted by Special Magistrates appointed under Ordinance No. II of 1942 since repealed by the new ordinance that they can prefer an appeal against their conviction and sentence; if so, when?

(*b*) Is it a fact that the Superintendent ascertained from each of the prisoners in his jail convicted by Special Magistrates whether he desires to file an appeal against his conviction and sentence?

(*c*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any arrangements have been made by the Superintendent to cause the appeal filed of those, who expressed their desire to do so?

(*d*) If the answers to (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) are in the negative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps Government propose to take in the matter having regard to chapter XIV of the Jail Code (7th Edition) regarding appeals and petitions by prisoners?

(*e*) Is it a fact that the Superintendent has disallowed prisoners Sitaram Gupta, Nihar Mukherjee, Debi Dutta, Makhan Shani convicted by Special Magistrates, to file an appeal against their conviction and sentence?

(*f*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reasons for disallowing the appeals?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) Yes. On the 14th June, 1943.

(*b*) and (*c*) Yes.

(*d*) Does not arise.

(*e*) and (*f*) Nihar Mukherjee and Debi Dutta did not prefer any appeal. The other two prisoners were given necessary facilities to file appeals.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: মাননীয় সদস্য মহাশয় কি জানেন, এই প্রশ্নটা পাঠাবার আগে ঐ সকল prisonerদের কাছ থেকে, অডিন্যান্স অনুসারে Special Magistratesদের দ্বারা তাদের যে বিচার হয়েছিল, সেই বিচারের বিরুদ্ধে prisonersরা কোন appeal করতে চায় কিনা সে সম্বন্ধে তাদের মত নেবার কোন ব্যবস্থা করা হয় নাই ?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Sir, Government first issued a memorandum on the 17th June 1943 asking that necessary steps according to the new Ordinance should be taken to give facilites to security prisoners, and again on the 25th June, 1943, another circular marked immediate was issued to all the Superintendents of Jails asking them to give immediate facilities to those security prisoners who were sentenced to death and other facilities to the prisoners with the minimum of delay. These were the exact words.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: আমার বক্তব্য হলো এই যে, এই প্রশ্ন পাঠাবার আগে পর্য্যন্ত তাদের সে সুযোগ দেওয়া হয় নাই।

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Sir, that is not relevant strictly speaking.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: আমি আর একটা প্রশ্ন করছি, সেখানে যারা টুপি ব্যবহার করে নাই,যেমন নিহার মুখার্জি, দেবী দত্ত, তাদের সেজন্য সাজা দেয়া হয়েছে এবং তাদের definitely বলা হয়েছে টুপি যতক্ষণ না ব্যবহার করা হবে—, ততক্ষণ তাদের অনুমতি দেয়া হবে না appeal করবার জন্য—whether that is the fact or not—এইটে আমি জানতে চাই।

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: His question is whether it is a fact that they were not allowed facilities.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Government is not aware of it. My information is that all facilities were given to the prisoners.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: এই Government এর এই information দিয়েছে কে? যে Superintendent এর বিরুদ্ধে অভিযোগ তিনিই দিয়েছেন না অপর কেউ?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You want to know the source of information?

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: Yes, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Chattopadhyay wants to put to you what is the source of your information that the security prisoners get every facility for appeal.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Government's usual source of information.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: What is the source of information এইটা জানতে চাই?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state in view of the question as set forth in (c) and the answer given thereto whether it is a fact that the Superintendent disallowed the prisoners Nihar Mukherjee and Debi Dutta from preferring any appeal?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Government's information is that Nihar Mukherjee and Debi Dutta did not prefer any appeal.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: No, no, the question is not that. The question is whether the Superintendent disallowed the prisoners Nihar Mukherjee and Debi Dutta from filing an appeal.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Government is not aware of it.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: মাননীয় সভ্য মহাশয় বলবেন কি, যার জেলে থাকা কালে কোন সাজা হয়েছে, সে যদি appeal কোরতে চায় তাহলে appeal কোরতে পারে ?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: If it is provided in the Jail Code, it must be so.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: মাননীয় সভ্য মহাশয় জানেন কি, ঐ নিহার মুখার্জি ও দেবী দত্তকে appeal করতে দেয়া হয় নাই on the ground যে তাদের জেল কোডের সাজা দেয়া হয়েছিল।

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I am not aware of it.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: সভ্য মহাশয় একবার কি ভাল করে enquiry করবেন তাদের কাছে ?

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is whether Government is considering the desirability of making an enquiry.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The matter will be looked into.

Assault by labourers on officers of Quinine Factory at Mungpoo.

***118. Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Forest and Excise Department aware of the existence of strained feelings between the workers and the supervising staff of the Government Quinine Factory at Mungpoo for some months past which led to the assault on some superior officers of the place by a section of the workers a few months ago?

(*b*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether the Government have made a thorough enquiry into the matter; and

(*ii*) what steps, if any, have been taken so far and are proposed to be taken by Government to bring the offenders to book and to ensure better feelings and safety of the officers in future as well as uninterrupted production?

(*c*) Is it a fact that some of the technical officers of the factory have had to be on long leave or had to tender resignation due to Government's failure to ensure safe atmosphere for work for them with dignity and prestige?

(*d*) Is it a fact that the strained feelings have been marked only after the reorganisation of the Cinchona cultivation and quinine manufacture work effected in recent years whereby an Indian Officer has been placed in a superior position?

MINISTER in charge of the FOREST and EXCISE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Promhari Barma): (*a*) Yes. The labour employed in the Cinchona plantations and factory made a violent demonstration on the 18th May, 1943, in the course of which the Superintendent, Cinchona (Mr. S. C. Sen) and the Quinologist (Dr. M. Sen) were injured.

(*b*) (*i*) Yes.

(*ii*) The Police investigated the case but submitted final report as sufficient evidence was not forthcoming as to the identity of the actual assailants.

A police outpost has been opened at Mungpoo for the maintenance of law and order.

The Deputy Labour Commissioner enquired soon after the occurrence into the grievances of the labour employed in the Cinchona factory and plantations. On the recommendation of the Deputy Labour Commissioner certain concessions have been given to the labourers. There has been no interruption in the production of quinine. Conditions in the plantations and the factory are normal now.

(*c*) No; it is not a fact that the Government failed to ensure safe atmosphere at Mungpoo. But Dr. M. Sen, the Quinologist, who has now resumed his duties had been on long leave since the 18th May, 1943, because of the severe injuries received by him and Mr. S. Mukherjee, Assistant Quinologist, resigned on the 1st November, 1943, as the service conditions at Mungpoo were not to his liking.

(*d*) No; an Indian Officer has been in charge of the Department since 1937. The trouble arose only during the last year.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: With reference to answer (*a*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Miss Mira Sen, sister of Mr. S. C. Sen, was also assaulted in course of the demonstration?

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: I am not aware of that.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that European members of the staff who disliked an Indian officer being placed over them actually fomented the trouble?

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: Government is not aware of that.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state where the European officers were when the alleged violent demonstration was being carried on by the labourers?

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: I do not know exactly. Either just after the occurrence or during the occurrence they came there.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Is it a fact that the said violent demonstration stopped as if by a magic wand as soon as European officers arrived on the spot?

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: I am not aware of that.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how many European officers are there?

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: I want notice. Perhaps 3 or 4.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the labourers brought to the notice of the Indian Superintendent their grievances ever in the past?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: On many occasions. You do not know facts.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: I want to know on how many occasions.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your question?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the labourers brought their grievances to the notice of the Superintendent who was assaulted ever in the past?

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: Yes, they were brought to the notice of the Superintendent but I cannot say exactly the time when they were done.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Any time this year?

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: I want notice.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what was the nature of those grievances and what were the particular grievances that the labourers placed before the Superintendent with their specific dates of applications?

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: I want notice.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: With reference to the reply given by the Hon'ble Minister, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the grievances were placed before the Superintendent during his regime or before his regime?

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: There were grievances placed before the Superintendent before and even during my regime. These grievances have been enquired into.

Maulvi MOHAMMED ISRAIL: With reference to answer (*b*) (*ii*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what are forms of concessions that have been granted to the labourers on the recommendation of the Deputy Labour Commissioner.

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: The following concessions have so far been granted to meet the grievances of labour employed in the Cinchona plantations and factory:—

(1) The workers have been given the dearness and supplementary allowances on account of the present emergency as in the case of other Government servants.

(2) Government shops have been opened for supply of rations at concession rates to all workers in the plantations and the factory.

(3) Workers in the plantations who have been given no land for cultivation have been compensated by an increase of one anna in their daily wages.

(4) The pasturage fee of annas 2 per cow per month has been abolished and free pasturage of one milch cow per adult worker has been allowed.

(5) The maximum range of pay of skilled workers in the plantations and the factory, viz., carpenters, blacksmiths and fitters and masons has been raised from Rs. 40 to Rs. 50 per mensem as a war measure for the period of the war.

(6) Men in the grinding house at the quinine factory have been allowed an extra pay of Re. 1 per month per head.

(7) It has been decided that posts up to the rank of Head Gangmen in the plantations should be filled up by promotion only.

(8) The number of holidays on full pay for *Durga Pujah* and *Dewali* in 1943 was increased from 6 days to 8 days.

These are the concessions which have been given and certain other proposals for meeting the grievances of labour are also under the consideration of Government now.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: On a point of order, Sir. Can a Minister make a statement in reply to a supplementary question?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not see that there is any bar to that.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Is it a fact that an Indian officer has been recently placed both in charge of the Quinine factory as well as of the plantation section of it, which formerly was in charge of Mr. Osborne?

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: Not recently; but in 1937, as I have already said.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is aware that after 1937 enquiries were made and the department reorganised?

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: What enquiries—I am not aware of any.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is a fact that during the last two years the relation between the Government Quinine Factory and the Forest Department which was formerly controlling the plantation section was remodelled and the whole work was entrusted to the head of the Quinine Factory which led to heart-burnings and bickerings?

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: Sir, this question does not arise, because the Forest Department is another Department.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, what was your question?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that during recent years the control of the quinine factory and the plantation section of cinchona was reorganised and placed under the charge of an Indian Officer?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That was your first question.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware ——

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: On a point of order, Sir. The Hon'ble Minister has already replied to that.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is aware that a non-Bengali and non-Indian element in the Forest Department has been trying to create a difference between the Bengali employees and the hill tribes over there?

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: That question does not arise.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Whether the question arises or not is not for the Minister to say. Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that at Mungpoo there are a number of non-Bengali and non-Indian residents?

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: There must be many.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: *Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the relation between such of those residents and the Government Quinine factory?*

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: I am not aware.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Government are considering the desirability of making an enquiry into the state of affairs at Mungpoo with a view to find out whether there is any substance in the apprehensions entertained by the Bengali employees there?

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: There is no such apprehension. I have already answered that the situation in Mungpoo is normal now.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government are prepared to have an enquiry made into it?

(No answer.)

Compensation paid to the workers of factories for cases of accidents.

***119. Mr. SIBNATH BANERJEE:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Commerce, Labour and Industries Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) how many cases of accidents were reported by the employees to the Factory Inspector in 1943;

(*b*) in how many cases of accidents compensation has been paid in 1943;

(*c*) what were the total amounts paid as compensation in 1941, 1942 and in 1943;

(*d*) how many of these cases referred to in (*a*) were contested by the employers in the Workmen's Compensation Court; and

(*e*) how many of these cases were dismissed?

MINISTER in charge of the COMMERCE, LABOUR and INDUSTRIES DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. K. Shahabuddin): (*a*) There were 6 accidents reported by employees to Inspectors of Factories during the year 1943. Accidents are generally reported by employers. In fact, in 1943, 16,316 accidents were reported by employers at the office of the Chief Inspector of Factories, Bengal.

(*b*) The total number of cases in which employers deposited compensation with the Commissioner for Workmen's Compensation, Bengal, in 1943, was 840.

(*c*) Total deposits received by the Commissioner during the years 1941, 1942 and 1943, were as follows:—

		Rs.
1941	...	6,07,403
1942	...	4,92,128
1943	...	5,79,792

(*d*) 485 contested claims were instituted before the Commissioner during the year 1943.

(*e*) Out of the contested cases in respect of accidents referred to in (*a*) 97 were dismissed.

Opening of sugar distribution centres by mills.

*120. **Maulvi Md. ISRAIL:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Commerce, Labour and Industries Department be pleased to state whether—

(*i*) Government ascertained the capacity of the mills in crushing all sugarcane of the cordoned area before putting the cordon thereon, in particular the capacity of the Dayamayee Jayantee Sugar Mill at Kishoreganj within the period specified in the order;

(*ii*) the mills were in a position to open centres in all the places notified in the order during the current year and season; and

(*iii*) whether the Dayamayee Jayanti Sugar Mill has opened any centres at Hossainpur, Pattundia, Rampur, Atharabari, Nandail Road, Jasodharpur and Sachihata as notified in the *Gazette*?

The Hon'ble Mr. K. SHAHABUDDIN: (*a*) (*i*) Yes, by consultation with the Bengal Sugar Mills Association which represents the principal mills in the Province including the Dayamayee Jayantee Sugar Mill.

(*ii*) Presumed so.

(*iii*) No.

Maulvi MOHAMMED ISRAIL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the members of the Bengal Sugar Mills Association made any enquiries about the sugarcane acreage in the respective areas of these mills and also the yield expected therefrom?

The Hon'ble Mr. K. SHAHABUDDIN: Government is unable to say whether the Sugar Mills Association did those things or not.

Maulvi MOHAMMED ISRAIL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government have ascertained if they made any actual enquiry about the sugarcane acreage and also the yield expected therefrom?

Th Hon'ble Mr. K. SHAHABUDDIN: No, Sir.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is aware that there has been a great hardship experienced by a large number of cultivators in Nadia and Murshidabad districts where an attempt was made to cordon the districts for purposes of supply of sugarcane to the Beldanga and Ramnagar sugar mills?

The Hon'ble Mr. K. SHAHABUDDIN: He has put in so many points in his question. As far as the cordon is concerned there were many complaints received and since then Government have taken steps to rectify them.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is aware that while the Government issued orders to the cultivators not to sell sugarcane or convert it into *gur* for a year, extending up to 18 miles from the purchasing centres, the mills did not make any protest?

The Hon'ble Mr. K. SHAHABUDDIN: Government is not aware of that.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Government had received any representation from anybody drawing attention to the hardship caused because of the interference by the Government in the matter of sale of sugarcane in the Murshidabad district?

The Hon'ble Mr. K. SHAHABUDDIN: Various complaints were received and they were looked into and steps were taken to redress the grievances.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if the sugar mills in whose interest these were attempted, actually purchased any sugarcane available up to the middle of February last?

The Hon'ble Mr. K. SHAHABUDDIN: Sir, I submit that Dr. Sanyal is trying to introduce a controversial matter and the question therefore does not arise.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, the question is, whether Government ascertained the capacity of the mills in crushing all sugarcane of the cordoned area before putting the cordon thereon, to which the answer is, "Yes, by consultation with the Bengal Sugar Mills Association". My point is that in two definite places relating to the Beldanga Sugar Mills which never opened and which did not actually work or crush sugarcane and to the Ramnagar Sugar Mills which is not——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your question?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: My question is whether Government are aware that these two mills which where supposed to buy up the sugarcane of the Murshidabad district and part of Nadia, did not buy any sugarcane up to the middle of February?

The Hon'ble Mr. K. SHAHABUDDIN: I have already stated that these cordons were put in after consultation with the Bengal Sugar Mills Association, and as far as the Government is aware various complaints were received from time to time and they were looked into and redressed.

Maulvi MUHAMMED ISRAIL: With reference to answer (*iii*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reasons for which the centres in the aforesaid places were not opened?

The Hon'ble Mr. K. SHAHABUDDIN: I want notice.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is aware that two members of the Bengal Sugar Mills Association, namely, the Ramnagar Sugar Mills, Ltd., and the Radhakrishna Sugar Mills, Ltd., situated in Ramnagar, Plassey and Beldanga, never requested Government to put in a cordon?

The Hon'ble Mr. K. SHAHABUDDIN: I have never admitted that a cordon was put against Beldanga, and therefore, I submit, Sir, that question does not arise.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Next question.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I was on my legs——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: But after the last reply of the Hon'ble Minister I called on to the next question.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir. The Hon'ble Minister has just now stated that he never said that the cordon was introduced near about Beldanga but I have in my possession an original letter from the Subdivisional Officer, Sadar, which I had actually shown to the Hon'ble Minister——

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Is the honourable member in order to refer to an official document here?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I want your ruling on the question whether the Minister is entitled to misguide the House by a false statement.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, you know very well that it is not my business to ascertain whether a statement from an Hon'ble Minister is false or not. The Hon'ble Minister has given his answer and I think you have no right to state at this stage when I have passed on to the next question that he has made a false statement.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: After this reply from the Hon'ble Minister I can only say that he has misguided the House by making a false statement.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is a fact that the sugar mills often act at their sweet will because they deal in sugar? (Laughter.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Re-excavation of river Bidyadhari.

***121. Mr. HEM CHANDRA NASKER:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works (Irrigation) Department be pleased to state the area affected with flood owing to the silting of the rivers Bidyadhari and Piali?

(*b*) Is it a fact that the plan for re-excavation of a part of the river Bidyadhari was sanctioned long ago?

(*c*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state (*i*) how much money was allotted for the purpose, (*ii*) how much was actually spent, and (*iii*) the reason why the full scheme was not taken up by the Government?

(*d*) Is it a fact that a third channel was partially excavated connecting the Bidyadhari with Uttarbhag?

(*e*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that—

(*i*) only a portion of it has been excavated; and

(*ii*) no drainage was made of the water-logged area?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR (on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prasanna Pain): (*a*) About 100 square miles.

(*b*) Yes.

(*c*) Rs.5,000 and Rs.50,000 were allotted in 1941-42 and 1942-43 respectively but the work could not be taken up on account of the war.

(*d*) A partial scheme for providing a drainage outlet from the Auliapur *Bada* has been taken up.

(*e*) (*i*) The scheme is still under execution.

(*ii*) I am informed that the portion excavated before the rains gave appreciable drainage relief to the affected area.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state, with reference to answer (*d*), when is this partial scheme due to be completed?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: Before the next rains.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: With reference to answer (*e*) (*i*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what part of the scheme has been executed up to date?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: About half the portion of the scheme has been executed.

Mr. PUSPAJIT BARMA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the estimated cost of re-excavation of the rivers Bidyadhari and Peali?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: The estimated cost for the year 1940 was Rs. 3,03,658.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: With reference to answer (*c*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us what stood in the way in the matter of the execution of the scheme the plan of which had already been sanctioned?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: It was estimated at Rs. 3,03,658 but it could not be executed on account of higher charges of labour entailing greater expenditure.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Was it due to shortage of labour or was it due to financial difficulties?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: On account of financial difficulties.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: In view of the "Grow More Food" campaign, does the Government consider it desirable to execute the plan immediately?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: Government thought out an entirely different scheme costing Rs. 1,50,114 for the "Grow More Food" campaign.

Mr. PUSPAJIT BARMA: With reference to answer (*d*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when will the partial scheme for providing a drainage outlet be completed?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: I have already answered that question.

Delimitation of constituencies of Bankura District Board.

***123. SJ. MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) when the local boards in the district of Bankura were abolished;

(*b*) when the constituencies will be delimited for the purpose of election of members of the Bankura District Board;

(*c*) when the next reconstitution of that District Board is due; and

(*d*) when the election for the purpose of such reconstitution is to be held?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi Jalaluddin Ahmad): (*a*) With effect from the 1st June, 1940.

(*b*) The matter is under consideration of the Government and no definite date can be given.

(*c*) In March next.

(*d*) No definite date can be given now, as the election cannot take place till the constituencies of the Board have been delimited and other preliminary steps, prescribed by the Electoin Rules, have been taken.

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: Has the Government received any opinions or suggestions from the District Magistrate or the Divisional Commissioner in the matter of delimiting the constituencies?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: No.

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: Is the consideration of the Government pending receipt of those suggestions and opinions?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: The question of settling the number of members has to be solved first; then the delimitation question will come.

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: My question is whether the Government has received any suggestions or opinions from the Divisional Commissioner or the District Magistrate on this matter?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: I have already stated in my answer that the question of fixing the number of members of the board has to be settled first and the Government is in correspondence with the local officers over that question.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government did want the opinion of the District Magistrate and the Divisional Commissioner?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: Government is in correspondence about that matter.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: In view of the impending dissolution of the board in March next, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what arrangements have been made for the constitution of a new board in due time?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: Government is expediting the matter but it cannot be definitely said whether the election can take place in due time.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: What will be the position then?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: The life of the board will be automatically extended.

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: Will the Hon'ble Minister please tell the reason why the case was taken up at so late an hour and not in time so that the reconstitution of the board might have been made within the statutory period?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: I cannot ascertain any reason how the honourable member can say that the Government took up the matter late.

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to ascertain the reasons and tell us?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: In the opinion of the Government steps were taken in time.

Maulvi MD. ISRAIL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state on what basis the number of seats or members is ascertained?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: It is according to rules.

Quantity of quinine allotted to Bengal by the Government of India and its distribution.

***124. Mr. HEM CHANDRA NASKER:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to state the quantity of quinine allotted to this Province by the Government of India?

(*b*) Is it a fact that—

(*i*) the said quinine was not distributed to different districts until recently;

(*ii*) the distribution of quinine in the districts has been left to the District Magistrate and the Civil Surgeon; and

(*iii*) the Chairman to the District Board, 24-Parganas, has not been consulted in the matter of distribution of quinine within the district?

(*c*) If the answer to (*b*)(*iii*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reasons thereof?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi Jalaluddin Ahmad): (*a*) Up to date the Government of India have allotted to this Province 89,150 lbs. of quinine, 24,800 lbs. of cinchona febrifuge and seven million Atebrin tablets.

(*b*)(*i*) No.

(*ii*) At first, it was arranged that the District Magistrate, in consultation with the Civil Surgeon and District Health Officer, should be the District Rationing authority for quinine. As District Magistrates have many other preoccupations, and as circumstances made it necessary to obviate the delay occasioned by consultation it has recently been decided to relieve the District Magistrate of this duty and to appoint the Civil Surgeon as the District Rationing Authority.

(*iii*) I have no information.

(*c*) Does not arise.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister please tell us when the distribution of quinine had begun in the district?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: From the beginning of the last year.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister please state whether it is a fact that the distribution of quinine started after the Civil Surgeons were appointed rationing authorities——

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: No.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: ——and if so, when the Civil Surgeons——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He has answered "No"; how does that question arise?

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: My question was perfectly in order. I asked when were the Civil Surgeons——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Biswas, he has said "No". Therefore the question "if so" does not arise.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: He did not say so.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, he did.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Is it a fact that the distribution of quinine began towards the end of December 1943?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: No, distribution of quinine began from June.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Free distribution began in the end of December 1943.

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: No.

Babu MADHUSUDHAN SARKAR: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the distribution of quinine sulphate as well as quinine febrifuge or powder requires medical help and as in the river districts there is scarcity of medical officer the public were put to difficulties to get supply and distribution of quinine?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: Of course there were some difficulties at the beginning but everything now is all right.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: With regard to answer (*a*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what was the provincial requirement that was placed before the Government of India?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: I want notice about that.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when this quota was allowed to the province—what time—and whether in settling this quota the present requirements of the province were taken into account?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: I want notice.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether, in view of the serious situation in the province with respect to malaria epidemic, Government have taken into consideration the fact that this quota requires further revision and considerable augmentation?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: Yes, the matter is receiving the attention of the Government.

Khan Bahadur JASIMUDDIN AHMED: Is the Government aware that there is a lot of discontent in regard to distribution of quinine by the Civil Surgeon as the rationing authority?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: Yes, there is some complaint

Grant of dearness allowance and rations at controlled rates to Rural Public Health staff.

***125. Mr. Md. ABUL FAZL:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to state whether—

(*i*) the Rural Public Health staff are Government servants or District Boards' servants; and

(*ii*) they are allowed usual dearness allowance and rations at controlled rates?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*)(*ii*) is in the negative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason thereof?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether emergency cuts of pay at the rates of 10 per cent. and 5 per cent. were enforced upon this staff in 1932-33?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi Jalaluddin Ahmad): (*a*) (*i*) The Rural Public Health staff are the servants of the District Board concerned.

(*ii*) Results of inquiry reveal that almost all the District Boards have allowed their staff including members of Rural Public Health staff to draw some dearness allowance. Some of them were also supplied ration (rice or *atta*) at controlled or cheaper rate for some time during 1943.

(*b*) Does not arise.

(*c*) Yes.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why some employees were allowed dearness allowance and others excluded?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: Public Health employees are district board servants and almost all the district boards have chosen to allow dearness allowance to the Public Health servants.

General Discussion of the Budget.

Mr. GIASUDDIN AHMED: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, এবারের বাজেট আলোচনা করতে গিয়ে প্রথমেই মনে পড়ে বাঙলার সেই হৃদয়বিদারক মর্ম্মান্তিক কাহিনী এবং সেজন্য যারা দায়ী তাদের অকর্ম্মণ্যতা এবং অবহেলার কথা। যে মন্ত্রিবর্গগুলীর কার্য্যকলাপের ফলে বাংলা দেশের প্রায় ৪০।৪৫ লক্ষ নরনারী ও শিশু না খেয়ে মৃত্যু বরণ করতে বাধ্য হয়েছে তাদের দ্বারা রচিত বাজেটে বাংলার উন্নতিকর পরিকল্পনার কি আশা করা যেতে পারে? মাননীয় অর্থ-সচিব মহোদয় বাজেট পেশ করিতে গিয়ে প্রথমেই এই বৎসরের ঘাট্‌তি দেখিয়েছেন ১৭ কোটী ৪৬ লক্ষ টাকা। এই ঘাট্‌তি পড়ার কারণ কি? দেখা যায় ১৯৩৭-৩৮ সালে বাংলা সরকারের আয় মাত্র ১৩ কোটি টাকা ছিল এবং ১৯৪২-৪৩ সালে ঐ আয় ১৬ কোটি ৫০ লক্ষ টাকায় দাঁড়িয়েছে; তৎপর বিজলি কর, প্রমোদ কর, বিভিন্ন শুল্কের হার বাড়িয়ে এবং অন্যান্য উপায়ে এই বৎসরে ৫ কোটি ৯৮ লক্ষ টাকা ও আগামী বৎসরে ৬ কোটি ৬১ লক্ষ টাকা আয় বৃদ্ধি হয়েছে। ইহার উপর বিক্রয় করের হার দ্বিগুণ করিয়া ও কৃষি আয়কর হইতেও প্রায় ১ কোটি টাকা আয় বৃদ্ধি হইবে। তথাপি এই বৎসর ১০ কোটি ১০ লক্ষ টাকা এবং আগামী বৎসর ৭ কোটি ৩৬ লক্ষ টাকা বাজেটে ঘাট্‌তি পড়েছে। অর্থ-সচিব মহোদয় এই ঘাট্‌তি পূরণের কোনই পন্থা দেখান নাই। তবে

তিনি তাঁহার বাজেট বক্তৃতায় ট্যাক্সের খুব গুণগান করেছেন এবং জনগণের কল্যাণের জন্য নূতন ট্যাক্সের প্রয়োজনীয়তার আভাস দিয়াছেন। কিন্তু তাঁহাকে জিজ্ঞাসা করি বর্ত্তমানে বাংলার যে অবস্থা তাহাতে আরও নূতন ট্যাক্স করলে বাঙ্গালী জাতির অস্তিত্ব পাওয়া যাবে কি? খাদ্য-দ্রব্য এবং নিত্য-প্রয়োজনীয় জিনিষের যে দর হয়েছে তাহাতে আমাদের দেশের শতকরা ৯০ জনের ক্রয়-ক্ষমতা নাই। সেইজন্য লক্ষ লক্ষ লোক না খেয়ে মারা গিয়েছে ও মারা যাচ্ছে। শুধু তাই নয় কলেরা, বসন্ত প্রভৃতি মহামারীতে বিনা চিকিৎসায় বহু লোক প্রাণ দিতেছে। ইহার পরে যাঁরা আরও নূতন ট্যাক্স বসাইবার কল্পনা করেন তাঁহারা দেশের শত্রু কি মিত্র তাহা দেশবাসী বিচার করিবেন। মাননীয় ডেপুটি স্পীকার মহাশয়, আমার আর একটি প্রশ্ন বাংলার এই অবস্থার কারণ কি? এবং তাহার জন্য কে দায়ী সেই সম্পর্কে মাননীয় অর্থ-সচিব মহোদয় কোন কিছুই বলেন নাই। এইখানেই তাঁদের অকর্ম্মণ্যতা এবং দুর্ব্বলতার প্রমাণ পাওয়া যায়। মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলী নিজেদের দুর্ব্বলতা ঢাকতে গিয়ে তাঁদের ব্রহ্মাস্ত্র মুসলিম লীগকে সামনে রেখেছেন। এবং পাকিস্থানের বুলি আওড়াচ্ছেন। কিন্তু অতীব দুঃখের কথা বড়লাট লর্ড ওয়াভেল সাহেব তাঁহার দিল্লীর বক্তৃতায় পাকিস্থানকে কবর দিয়েছেন বললেও অত্যুক্তি হয় না। তবুও তাদের কায়েদেআজমের কোন বিবৃতি নাই। তাই বলি ধাপ্পাবাজী বেশীদিন চলে না এবং ধাপ্পাবাজী দ্বারা দেশের বা জাতির মঙ্গল করা যায় না। আমার বন্ধুদের বলছি এই মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলীর ধাপ্পাবাজীও আর বেশীদিন চলবে না। ইতিমধ্যেই বাংলার নূতন গভর্ণর বিপক্ষদলের নেতাদের সহিত বিস্তৃত আলোচনা আরম্ভ করেছেন। তিনি একজন বাস্তববাদী মানুষ, কাজেই তিনি বুঝতে পেরেছেন যে যখন বাংলার দুয়ারে ভীষণ যুদ্ধ এবং বাংলার জনসাধারণ দুর্ভিক্ষ ও মহামারীতে জর্জ্জরিত তখন বাংলার গভর্ণমেণ্টও মজবুত হওয়া দরকার। হয়ত তিনি বুঝতে পেরেছেন বাংলার জনসাধারণ বর্ত্তমান মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলীর উপর কোন আস্থা রাখে না। এবং জনসাধারণের আস্থাশূন্য মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলীর দ্বারা বর্ত্তমানে বাংলা গভর্ণ-মেণ্ট পরিচালনা করা মোটেই সঙ্গত হবে না। এবং দলবিশেষের দ্বারা সমস্যার সমাধান করার চেষ্টা বাতুলতা ভিন্ন আর কিছুই নহে।

Deputy Speaker মহোদয়, আমি বাজেট সম্পর্কে আরও দুই-চারিটি কথা বলতে চাই। আমি পূর্ব্বেই বলেছি ১৯৩৭-৩৮ সালে যখন বাংলা গভর্ণমেণ্টের আয় ছিল মাত্র ১১ কোটি টাকা তখন জাতিগঠনমূলক যে কাজ হোত আজ আয় বৃদ্ধি হয়ে প্রায় সাড়ে ২২ কোটি টাকা হওয়া সত্বেও জাতিগঠনমূলক কার্য্যের ব্যয়-বরাদ্দের বিশেষ বৃদ্ধি এবার বাজেটে দেখা যায় না। শিক্ষা বিভাগের ব্যয়-বরাদ্দ অতি অপ্রচুর। আজ এই দুর্দ্দিনে যখন সরকারী কর্ম্মচারীদের নানা-রূপ সুবিধা দেওয়া হচ্ছে সেখানে বেসরকারী শিক্ষায়তনের শিক্ষকদের কোনই ব্যবস্থা নাই। মাদ্রাসাগুলি সরকারী সাহায্যের অভাবে দরজা বন্ধ করতে বাধ্য হচ্ছে। প্রাইমারী স্কুলের শিক্ষক-গণ পরিবারের অন্নবস্ত্রের চিন্তায় অস্থির। এ-সবের কোন ব্যবস্থা নাই। অবশ্য বাজেটে দেখা যায় সস্তায় খাদ্যশস্য বিক্রয়ের লোকসান বাবদ ৮॥ কোটি টাকা এবং অসামরিক সরবরাহ বিভাগের ব্যয় ২॥ কোটি টাকা বরাদ্দ হয়েছে। কিন্তু এর দ্বারা জনসাধারণের কি উপকার হইবে? এই ১১ কোটি টাকার ব্যয়ভার জনসাধারণের ঘাড়ের উপর চাপান অত্যন্ত অন্যায় হয়েছে।

আমার অভিজ্ঞতা হতে জানি যখন সরকারী হুকুমে বেশী দরে ক্রয় করা হাজার হাজার মণ ধান-চাউল মজুদ ছিল তখন জনসাধারণ ধান-চাউলের অভাবে না খেয়ে মরেছে। আমন ধান উৎপন্ন হবার পর যখন দাম নেমে গেল তখন গভর্ণমেণ্টও বাধ্য হলেন এই মজুদ মাল সস্তা দরে বিক্রয় করতে। সেই লোকসান বাংলার লোকের উপর চাপান হোল এর চেয়ে অন্যায় আর কি হতে পারে। অসামরিক সরবরাহ বিভাগের জন্য এই যে ২॥ কোটি টাকা ব্যয়-বরাদ্দ

করা হয়েছে হয়ত কতকগুলি সরকারী কর্মচারীর সংখ্যা বৃদ্ধি করা হয়েছে এবং তাদের ভাতার ব্যবস্থা হয়েছে কিন্তু জনসাধারণের কি সুবিধা হয়েছে। এই ২॥ কোটি টাকার কতক অংশ শিক্ষা ও স্বাস্থ্যের জন্য ব্যয় হলে কাজ হোত। মোটের উপর বলা যায় অর্থ-সচিব মহাশয় যে নূতন নূতন ট্যাক্স বসিয়ে ঘাটতি পূরণের ব্যবস্থা করছেন তার দ্বারা জনসাধারণের বিন্দুমাত্রও উপকার হয় নাই। আমরা যে তিমিরে ছিলাম তার চেয়ে অনেক গুণ বেশী তিমিরে আচ্ছাদিত হচ্ছি। হয়ত মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলী বলবেন যুদ্ধের জন্য এই অবস্থা হয়েছে। জিজ্ঞাসা করব যুদ্ধ কি কেবল আমাদের দেশে হতেছে। আমাদের দেশের ভিতর যুদ্ধ এখনও নামে নাই। যে-সব দেশের উপর দিয়ে যুদ্ধ চলছে সে দেশের লোকেরা ত না খেয়ে বিড়াল কুকুরের মত মরে না। তার কারণ সে দেশের গভর্ণমেণ্টের চিন্তাশক্তি আছে, মেরুদণ্ড আছে, তারা জনসাধারণের স্বার্থের চিন্তা করতে জানে।

অর্থ-সচিব মহোদয় অধিক শস্য ফলাও আন্দোলনের জন্য ১ কোটি ৮৫ লক্ষ টাকা বরাদ্দ করেছেন। তিনি খবর রাখেন কি বাংলার চাষীর অবস্থা কি? তারা খাদ্যাভাবে ও নানাপ্রকার মহামারীতে উজাড় হতে চলেছে। তাদের লবণ ভাত জুটাইবার ক্ষমতা নাই। মফঃস্বলে প্রতি সের লবণ ৸০ আনা হতে ১।০ টাকায় বিক্রয় হতেছে। ইহার প্রতিকার প্রথম করুন, তারপর অধিক খাদ্য ফলাও আন্দোলন করা যাবে।

যদি বাংলার বিভিন্ন সমস্যার সমাধান করতে হয়, তবে বাংলার এই দুর্দ্দিনে দলাদলি ভুলে গিয়ে জনসাধারণের আস্থাভাজন সর্ব্বদলীয় মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলী গঠিত হওয়া একান্ত প্রয়োজন। সর্ব্বদলীয় মন্ত্রিমণ্ডল গঠিত হলে তাদের পক্ষ হতে সমস্যা সমাধানকল্পে যে দাবী হবে তাহা ভারত সরকার কিছুতেই উপেক্ষা করতে পারবেন না। তখন দেশের শান্তি ফিরে আসার সম্ভাবনা আছে।

Mr. ASHUTOSH MULLICK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, মান্যবর অর্থ-সচিবের বাজেট বক্তৃতার প্রস্তাবনা—ঋণং কৃত্বা ঘৃতং পিবেৎ—চার্ব্বাক উক্তির সঠিক ইংরেজী অনুবাদ। এবং উপসংহার—অর্থনীতিবিদ কৌটিল্যের অর্থশাস্ত্রের "জাতীয় সর্ব্বনাশ ও প্রতিকার" অধ্যায়ের অনুকরণে, অতিরিক্ত মাত্রায় করকর্ষণ রীতি অথবা পীড়ন দ্বারা দমনরীতি প্রয়োগে ধনীর অস্বাভাবিক স্ফীতি হ্রাস করার নীতির অনুকরণ। তাঁর গবেষণামূলক বাজেট প্রবন্ধ, যদিও বাজেটের বিষয়বস্তু ব্যতীত সর্ব্বাংশে সহজ ও স্বকীয়তায় নবীন, তাহলেও আত্মগোপনের আড়ম্বরকে উপহাস কোরে বাজেটের বিষয়বস্তুর দৈন্য যেন প্রকাশ হয়ে পড়েছে। ফাঁকা আওয়াজ যে কতখানি চিত্ত-চমৎকারী হতে পারে, তাই আবার স্বতন্ত্র গবেষণার বিষয় হয়ে দাঁড়িয়েছে। বাংলা সরকার যেন পরের ধনে বড়মানুষী করতে গিয়ে, নিজের ঘরের পুঁজির কথা একেবারে ভুলে গিয়েছে। ঘরোয়া জমা-খরচের দু'চার টাকার গরমিল হ'লে ওতে কিছু আসে যায় না, কিন্তু তাই বলে বাংলা সরকারের বাজেটে বেপরোয়া ঘাটতির বেহিসেবী আব্দারকে উপেক্ষা করা চলে না। যারা সাধু, যারা মস্ত লাভের দিকে তাকিয়ে থাকে, তারা ছোট গরমিলকে ডরায়, হিসাবকে নিখুঁত সত্য, খাঁটি না কোরে বাঁচে না। কিন্তু বাংলা সরকার উচ্চতর কর্ত্তৃপক্ষের হঠকারিতায় দেউলিয়ার খাতায় নাম লেখাতে চায়; কাজেই বাজেটের এতবড় একটা ঘাটতিকেও বৃদ্ধাঙ্গুষ্ঠ দেখাইয়া তার বৌলিকত্ব বজায় রাখতে সমর্থ হয়েছে। বাংলা সরকারের বাজেটও—খাঁটি এবং ভেজালবিহীন; যেন উত্তরপাড়ার ভেজালবিহীন দন্তমাজন—বিশুদ্ধ ছাইয়ের গুঁড়া। সারা বাজেট বক্তৃতা নিংড়ালে যে জনহিতকর ব্যয়-বরাদ্দ বিন্দুপাত হয় তা তপশীলভুক্ত জাতির শিক্ষাকল্পে মাসিক ব্যয়-বরাদ্দ কয়েক লক্ষ টাকা। যদিও দেবতা সমক্ষে নিবেদিত নির্ম্মাল্যের ন্যায় উক্ত

বাহ্যাড়ম্বরে স্বীয় অক্ষুণ্ণত্ব সগৌরবে বজায় রাখবে তথাপি সমবেত তপঃকৃচ্ছ্র সাধনেও উহার পৌনপৌনিকত্ব গতিলাভ হয় নাই।

এখানে অবশ্য মন্ত্রি মহাশয় একটা রাজনৈতিক মারপ্যাঁচ দিয়েছেন। বাংলা সরকারের এক দিকে হিংস্র ব্যাঘ্র কেন্দ্রীয় সরকার, অপর দিকে ক্ষুধিত বৃটিশ সিংহ, মধ্যস্থলে মৃত্যুভয়ে সন্ত্রস্ত ছাগ শিশুর ন্যায় সরকারের বর্ত্তমান বছরের বাজেট। ফলে ওতে আদর্শের সাধনা নাই, কর্ত্তব্যের প্রেরণা নাই, দায়িত্ব উদ্যাপনের চেষ্টা নাই, মর্য্যাদা রক্ষার বালাই নাই, আন্তরিকতার প্রাণস্পন্দন নাই,—আছে কেবল গতানুগতিকতার মোহ। কাজেই মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলীর কর্ত্তব্য অনুষ্ঠানের পৌরুষ নাই, আছে ভণ্ডামি ও আত্মপ্রতারণা। সুযোগ বুঝে বৃটিশ সরকারও তাহাদের নির্দ্দেশ পালনকারী কেন্দ্রীয় সরকার, স্বীয় যুদ্ধের সামরিক ব্যয়ের গুরুভার বাংলা সরকারের রাজকোষের উপর চাপিয়ে দিয়েছেন। বাংলা সরকারও যেন যুদ্ধ প্রয়োজন পূরণ জন্য বিল্বপত্র ভক্ষিত বলিদানের ছাগ শিশুর ন্যায় মাথা বিক্রয় কোরে ব'সে আছে। কিম্বা এ যেন—"পরের বাড়ীর সাদী, নেচে মরে হাবামজাদী"। (Laughter from all sides.) বৃটিশ সরকারের রাঘব বোয়ালী বিপুল চাহিদার শেষ কোথায় কে জানে? এই বিরাট অপচয় কি বাংলা সরকারের ট্যাক্সরূপী ভিক্ষাপাত্র সঙ্কুলন কোরতে সমর্থ হবে? বাংলা সরকার যদি সেই ভরসায় থাকেন তাহলে তাকে অনন্তকাল অপেক্ষা করতে হবে; অধিকন্তু, দুর্ভিক্ষ রাক্ষসী চিরস্থায়ী বাসিন্দা হিসাবে বাংলা দেশে বসবাস করবে। আমার মনে হয়, অনাথ পিণ্ডদ্ সুতার অক্ষয় ভিক্ষাপাত্রও তাকে তাড়াতে সক্ষম হবে না।

বাজেটে ঘাটতি পূরণের কি'বা, রাজকোষের অবস্থার উন্নতির জন্য অর্থ-সচিব কোন প্রস্তাব করেন নাই। আমরা তাঁর অসুবিধা ও অক্ষমতা উপলব্ধি কোরছি। দুর্ভিক্ষে সাহায্য, অধিক খাদ্য ফলাও আন্দোলন এবং খাদ্যশস্য বিক্রয়ের লোকসান ও সরকারী কর্ম্মচারীদের অতিরিক্ত ভাতা প্রভৃতি তিনটি কারণে এই শোচনীয় অবস্থা ঘটে নাই। শুধু ব্যয়ের অঙ্ক বৃদ্ধি পেয়েই এই ঘাটতির সৃষ্টি হয় নাই। বিশ্ব কল্যাণকর মহাযুদ্ধের অযাচিত করুণা অপক্ষপাতে আয়-ব্যয়নির্ব্বিশেষে বাংলা সরকারের বাজেটের শ্রীবৃদ্ধিসাধন করেছে। উদাহরণস্বরূপে, আবগারী বিভাগের আয়, ষ্ট্যাম্প বিভাগের আয়। আবগারী বিভাগের আয়—কাকতালীয়বৎ। শরণাগতত্রাতা শ্বেতাঙ্গ মহাপুরুষের কায়ব্যূহ, বৈদেশিক সৈনিক পুরুষসমূহের আবির্ভাবে আবগারী বিভাগ প্রভূত অনুগৃহীত হয়েছেন। আবগারী বিভাগে প্লাবন উপস্থিত হয়েছে। ফলে বাংলা সরকারের বাজেটের আয়ের অঙ্ক শ্রীবৃদ্ধি লাভ করেছে। আবগারী পর্য্যায়ের দ্রব্যাদির উপর অতিরিক্ত ট্যাক্স চাপানোর ফলে অথবা আবগারী বিভাগের নিয়ন্ত্রণজনিত কৌশলে এই অভাবনীয় ঘটেছে বলে মনে হয় না; অথচ আত্মারাম অর্থ-সচিব মহাশয় স্বীয় কৃতিত্ব গৌরবের আত্মপ্রসাদে মশগুল। এমন কি প্রকাশ্যে বজ্রনির্ঘোষে আত্মম্ভরিতা ঘোষণা করতে বিন্দুমাত্র কুণ্ঠাবোধ করেন নাই। তারপর ষ্ট্যাম্প বিক্রয়ের খাতে—বাংলা সরকারের খাতে বাংলা সরকারের আয়ের অঙ্কেরও শ্রীবৃদ্ধি হয়েছে। দুর্ভিক্ষের পীড়নে কৃষক বাঙ্গালী পেটের দায়ে বণিয়াদি ভিটামাটি বিক্রয় কোরে সর্ব্বস্বান্ত হয়েছে। আর তার ফলে হয়েছে বাংলা সরকারের রাজকোষের এই উন্নতি। (MAULVI ABDUL WAHED: ওঁরা বড় কৃষক দরদী কি না!) এই আয়ও অস্থায়ী। এতে মন্ত্রী মহাশয়ের উল্লসিত হবার মত কিছু একটা নয়। নানাবিধ করকর্ষণে বাজেটে আয়ের অঙ্ক যা বৃদ্ধি হয়েছে, এ শ্রীবৃদ্ধি স্বতঃসিদ্ধ। এ বিষয়ের বিশদ আলোচনা নিষ্প্রয়োজন।

এখন প্রকৃত প্রস্তাবে এই বিরাট ঘাটতির ফলে বাংলা দেশের এই শোচনীয় দুর্দ্দশার জন্য দায়ী কে? প্রত্যক্ষ অনুমান আগম (authority) প্রভৃতি পরীক্ষায় প্রমাণিত হয়েছে—এই সর্ব্বনাশ সংঘটনের নিদান কারণ—সর্ব্বনাশা যুদ্ধ। সামরিক বিভাগের অন্যায় আবদারে

বাংলা সরকারের মন্ত্রিমণ্ডল এই [illegible] একদিকে প্রশ্রয় দিচ্ছেন, আবার বড়াই কোরে ট্যাক্সজর্জরিত জনসাধারণের উপর পুনঃপুনঃ ট্যাক্স বসিয়ে কর্ত্তব্য সম্পাদনে বাহাদুরি নিচ্ছেন এবং ভবিষ্যতে আরও অধিকতর ট্যাক্স বসানোর প্রতিশ্রুতি পালন মানসে আশ্বাসবাণী প্রচার কোরছেন,—যার বিনিময়ে হয়ত বা বাংলার মন্ত্রিত্ব গদিতে মৌরসী স্বত্ব সাব্যস্ত হবে। আর প্রজাসাধারণ আমরা, নিরাশ্রয় ভেলার মত জীবনসমুদ্রে ইতস্ততঃ বিক্ষিপ্ত হচ্ছি অথচ আমরা জিজ্ঞাসা করতে পারি না কি—কেন রাবণের দোষে সিন্ধুর বন্ধন? ভাগ্যিস করুণাবিগলিতচিত্ত মন্ত্রী মহাশয়ের বাজেট, রামায়ণের লঙ্কাকাণ্ডে কালনেমির লঙ্কা ভাগ—যুদ্ধোত্তর পরিকল্পনা সমস্যার প্রতি তীক্ষ্ণ দৃষ্টি আকৃষ্ট হয় নাই, তা না হলে শ্রাদ্ধ কতদূর গড়াতো কে জানে? হয়ত পর্ব্বত-প্রমাণ বাজেটের ঘাটতি আরও এত বৃহত্তর হত যে কেন্দ্রীয় সরকারের কৃপাদৃষ্টি পেলেও পঙ্গু বাংলা সরকারের পক্ষে উহা লঙ্ঘন করা সম্ভব হত না।

পক্ষান্তরে—মহাকালের ধ্বংসলীলা সহচর বর্ত্তমান বিশ্বব্যাপী মহাসমরের মর্ত্ত্য জীবনের "লালয়েৎ পঞ্চবর্ষাণির" শৈশবকাল প্রায় শেষ হতে চলেছে। তার বয়সসুলভ চপলতার কৈফিয়ৎ ক্রমশঃ যেন অসহ্য হয়ে উঠছে। ভেদনীতি প্রভাব সঞ্জাত বৃটিশ বুরোক্রাসীর অকালপক্কতাকে ভারতবাসী আমরা, বাঙ্গালী আমরা, কতকাল আর বরদাস্ত করবো, আর কতকাল ক্ষমার চোখে দেখবো? এর পরও যদি অভিজ্ঞতাপ্রসূত জ্ঞান অর্জনের চেষ্টা না করি তাহলে আত্মহত্যা করতে হবে না কি? সর্ব্বনাশা যুদ্ধের ফলাফলের সহিত ভারতবর্ষের তথা বাংলা দেশের কোন প্রকার স্বার্থগন্ধ নাই, কোন সংশ্রব নাই, অতএব দাতাকর্ণের আদর্শে স্বার্থলোলুপ ছদ্মবেশী শাসক প্রভুদের চাহিদা পূরণের জন্য এ আত্মবলিদান কেন? কিংবা, আত্মদানের পুণ্য সঞ্চয়ে মৃতকল্প বাঙ্গালীর পুনর্জীবন লাভ হবে কি? তা যদি না হয়, তা হলে বাংলা সরকারের ন্যায়তঃ প্রতিবাদ করা উচিত। কিন্তু তা হবার জো'টি নাই। বাংলা সরকারের অবস্থা যেন —"চোরের গৃহিনী যথা ফুকরিতে নারে।" (Laughter from all sides.) আইন শৃঙ্খলার বাহকগণ ইহার জন্য মোটেই লজ্জিত বা বিচলিত নন। দূরে থেকে কেন্দ্রীয় সরকারের পীড়ন-নীতির তারিফ কোরে কর্ত্তব্য শেষ কোরচেন।

বলা বাহুল্য, খাদ্যশস্যের আমদানী-বিতরণী ব্যবস্থা এবং অধিক খাদ্য ফলাও আন্দোলনের মল্লযুদ্ধ কেরামতিতে বাংলা দেশ থেকে দুর্ভিক্ষ পরাজিত হয়ে পলায়ন করবে না, কিম্বা উক্ত দুই পদ সম্প্রসারণে জরাসন্ধ বধের অনুকরণে দুষ্ট দুর্ভিক্ষ-দানবদলন সম্ভব হবে না। মন্ত্রী মহাশয়ের সে দুরাশা অদূরদর্শিতারই পরিচায়ক। এমন কি আনুসঙ্গিক পুনর্গঠন প্রণালীর পালোয়ানীর পাঁয়তারার ভয়ে ভীত হয়ে দুর্ব্বল বালকের ন্যায় দুর্ভিক্ষ পাততাড়ি গুটিয়ে চলে যাবে না। যদিও বাংলা দেশে বর্ত্তমানে দুর্ভিক্ষের স্থায়ীত্ব সরকার স্বীকার করবে না, কিন্তু তার সমপ্রভাবসম্পন্ন যথাক্রমে অনশন, অর্দ্ধাশন প্রমুখ সুযোগ্য বংশধরগণ সগৌরবে বিদ্যমান—একথা অস্বীকার করার উপায় নাই। এদের কেউই বুভুক্ষা প্রতিযোগিতায় একচক্রা গ্রামের বক রাক্ষসের চেয়ে হেয় নন। কাজেই উহাকে সবংশে নির্ব্বংশ করতে হলে পুনর্গঠন পরিকল্পনা বলিষ্ঠ ভীমভুজের গদা প্রহরণ প্রয়োজন। শুধু পদাঘাতে অত্যাচারের মাত্রা বৃদ্ধি পাবে মাত্র। অথচ, প্রতিভাবান মন্ত্রী মহাশয়ের বাজেট কাব্যে পুনর্গঠন পরিকল্পনা কাব্যে উপেক্ষিত নায়কের পর্য্যায়ে পর্য্যবসিত হয়েছে। তাঁর উর্ব্বর লেখনীর এই অবহেলিত কার্পণ্য মার্জনীয় অপরাধ নহে। ভাবগতিক থেকে মনে হয় কেবল দর্শনীর লোভে হাতুড়ে চিকিৎসকের ন্যায় মন্ত্রী মহাশয় যেন রোগ নির্ণয়ে চিকিৎসার ব্যবস্থা না কোরে মাত্র উপসর্গ নিবারণের বৃথা প্রয়াস পেয়েছেন। পুনর্গঠন প্রণালী দুর্ভিক্ষ বিতাড়নের আহার, ঔষধ দুইই। মন্ত্রী মহাশয়ের যদি উহা প্রতিকারের সত্যিকারের ইচ্ছা থাকে, তা'হলে তিনি যেন এই দিব্যাস্ত্রকে কোণঠাসা না করেন।

প্রকারান্তরে কল্যাণের মুখোসপরা প্রাদেশিক স্বায়ত্ত-শাসনই গৌণতঃ বাংলা দেশের এই অকল্যাণের—এই দুঃখ-দুর্দ্দশার জন্য দায়ী। পাখী তার স্বাভাবিক মাতৃত্ব সংস্কারে একটা পাথরের ডিম অভাবে একটা ঘোড়ার ডিম পেলেও আগ্রহ সহকারে তা দিতে বসে। তাতে তার ডিমে তা-দেবার স্বাভাবিক ব্যাকুলতা নিবৃত্ত হয় বটে, কিন্তু সে তা-দেয়া হতে শাবক জন্মে না। তেম্নি "গরু মেরে জুতো দান" করবার প্রবৃত্তিতে কয়েক শতাব্দী ব্যাপী হাত-পাকানো সিদ্ধহস্ত ইংরাজ পরিচালিত স্বায়ত্ত-শাসনের অনুগ্রহে স্বার্থান্ধ ব্যক্তি-বিশেষের দেশ শাসন করার আকাঙ্ক্ষা মিট্‌তে পারে, কিন্তু তার দ্বারা দেশের প্রকৃত মঙ্গল সাধন হতে পারে না। অর্থ-সচিব মহাশয়ের ব্যক্তিত্বে ও কর্ম্মপদ্ধতিতে বঙ্গবাসী জনসাধারণের যথেষ্ট ভরসা ছিল, অগাধ শ্রদ্ধা ছিল; কিন্তু বর্ত্তমানে মন্ত্রিত্ব গ্রহণে তাঁর দেশসেবার উৎকট দেশ-প্রীতি—যেন তাঁর সমুদ্রের সহিত মিলিত হবার আহ্বানকে অগ্রাহ্য কোরে—সেই সমুদ্রসৈকতে কূপ খনন করার প্রবৃত্তি এবং তারই গণ্ডীতে সমুদ্রকে ধরা দেবার জন্য আহ্বান করার আশাতিরিক্ত স্পর্দ্ধা!! মান্যবর অর্থ-সচিব মহাশয়ের বর্ত্তমান স্বরূপ, একোদর পৃথক্‌গ্রীব অন্যোন্য ফলভক্ষিণ ভারণ্ড পক্ষীর ন্যায়। একই নেতার নেতৃত্ব দৌলতে প্রয়োজনবোধে বিভিন্ন দল, একের মন্ত্রিত্ব গ্রহণ, অপরের মন্ত্রিত্ব বর্জন। ফলে পঞ্চোদীন সমাহারে আলাউদ্দিনের আশ্চর্য্য প্রদীপের সমপ্রভাবসম্পন্ন ধর্ম্মের রাঙতা মোড়া মন্ত্রী-মহামহীরুহের আওতায় পাইন-বনস্পতি পাইন-আপেল গুল্মে পরিণত হয়েচে, এবং তদুপাদমূলে মন্ত্রিসভা বিপুল সমারোহে আসর জাঁকিয়ে বসেছেন; আর সেখানে অর্থ-সচিব, গোস্বামী মহাশয় যেন কৃতজ্ঞচিত্তে নুন খাইয়া ট্যাক্স-মহিমা-গুণ কীর্ত্তন গাহিতেছেন!—ভাবাবেশে উল্লসিত-চিত্ত সপার্ষদ মন্ত্রিদল দোহার করিতেছেন!!

সাঙ্গোপাঙ্গসহ ট্যাক্স অবতার অচিরে বঙ্গ-রঙ্গমঞ্চ মাঝে অবতীর্ণ হয়ে তাণ্ডবলীলা-প্রকট করবেন সন্দেহ নাই।

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Mallik, how long will you continue.?

Mr. ASHUTOSH MALLIK: I have almost finished, Sir, পারিশ্রমিক স্বরূপে পর্য্যাপ্ত পরিমাণে মালপো হয়ত বা বিতরিত হবে। এতে কিন্তু শ্রোতারা পুলকিত হতে পারছেন না। (A member: কেন তাদের ভাগে কি কিছু প্রসাদই পড়বে না?) যতদূর মনে হয় সেখানে যদিচ সনাতন গোস্বামী মত অচল হয়ে গেছে তথাপি আমরা কি আশা করতে পারি না যে দারুণ দুর্য্যোগের দুর্দ্দিনে দরিদ্র কৃষক বাঙালীর ভাগ্যে গোস্বামী মতে পরাহে (laughter) অর্থাৎ অন্ততঃ অভাব-অনটনের কাল গৌণে পতিতপাবনী ট্যাক্স দেওয়ার কঠোর ব্রত উদ্‌যাপনের সৌভাগ্য মিলিবে কি!

Mr. C. GRIFFITHS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is the irony of fate that it should fall to the lot of the Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra Goswami who was once a Congressman to present the 1944-45 budget showing the staggering deficit of 11 crores and 20 lakhs and to inform the House that Bengal is bent double with woe and agony. He should be complimented for the courageous stand he has taken and the manner in which he placed facts before the House detailing the afflictions of 1943 and it is to the credit of the Opposition and Dr. Sanyal for patiently and attentively listening to him. For once the House seemed impressed, perhaps due to the seriousness of the situation brought about by majority rule by which means the Congress demanded the withdrawal of British rule at the Centre and forced the Muslim League to fight for the Pakisthan scheme and in consequence to have a League Ministry in Bengal.

Sir, the Finance Minister gave us estimates of 2 years' working to show that there is still hope of better days ahead if he could get the support and co-operation of the Legislature and the public. The figures given were as follows: revenue 21 crores 34 lakhs and expenditure 32 crores 54 lakhs and again revenue 21 crores 97 lakhs and expenditure 30 crores 43 lakhs, leaving a deficit of 11 crores 20 lakhs this year and 8 crores 46 lakhs next year. Later he informed us that the deficits would be reduced each year by 1 crore 10 lakhs by receiving our quota of 20 per cent. from the income-tax pool at the Centre.

Sir, it is useless at present to criticise the expenditure under the various heads; that can be done later when dealing with the grants. We are told that the bulk of our money was spent due to the war, on civil defence, famine and the "Grow More Food" campaign. Then the deficit becomes a liability of the Centre. If we feel that there was no justification, that the money was mis-spent, then the next question arises who is responsible, the Legislature with its Ministers or the Governor with his I.C.S. officers?

Sir, the ravages of war, floods, famine and pestilence can be got over but not the evils of communal strife and disunity for a house divided against itself must fall. Majority rule in India has been the cause of all our trouble. It is the worst form of aggression as it blots out the minorities. We have had practical lessons given us. How each party resorts to might and not right when placed in power, simply because the leader has to provide for his supporters. Today in Bengal, the Muslim League with the Scheduled Castes are displacing the Caste Hindus, the non-League Muslims and the Christians. Therefore, instead of construction, we find obstruction and destruction everywhere and the country being brought to ruin. Has the Governor no power to intervene and save the country from going from bad to worse?

Sir, Bengal is still very rich with Nature's bounties and, what is more, Bengal has the "teeming millions" who are satisfied to live on their meagre fare, offering the businessman glorious chances to industrialise the country and to increase our agricultural products. All we want is a compromise, a settlement among the three nations, the Hindus, the Muslims and the British to work with a view to bring prosperity to Bengal, India and the British Commonwealth. And this can only be done by a non-communal leader, first selected by the House and then supported by the Governor to form a Cabinet with representatives from all parties. The Opposition Leader also should form a Cabinet on the same lines with salaries being known as the Governor's Opposition Party. There is to be no communal group. The House is to work as one nation. We must be clear on this point. There must be no misunderstanding that this is the Bengal Legislative Assembly, and that everyone is a Bengali for the occasion. We do not want any ambiguity in the matter. We all know that the letter "V" means Victory, but as the Roman V it stands for 5th column and one never knows what is really meant by the symbol "V". (Cheers.)

Sir, the war has forced the country to expand certain industries and with what excellent results. Our trade in cement, coal, cotton piecegoods, engineering works, jute, leather goods, matches, paper, pig iron, tobacco, sugar, sulphuric acid, steel ingots and tea have all shown a tremendous increase. Yet we find that the total war orders placed in India up to the

end of 1941 amounted to only 300 crores of rupees against 11,000 crores of rupees placed in Canada—over 36 times as much as ours and why? Because India imported everything from abroad from pins, screws and nails to engines, motor cars and aeroplanes. What has made Japan, Russia, Germany and the U.S.A. such great nations? Nothing but industries. Today we unite to fight our enemies. After the war we must unite to industrialise India. A prosperous India will mean a stronger British Commonwealth. Our slogan should be "Industrialise India and build the British Commonwealth". (Cries of "hear" "hear".) Take our sugar industry—it is the largest in the world, it is 14 times as much as it was in 1922-23, but due to the control muddle, we in Calcutta are allowed 1 seer per head per month although this year's estimate is more than last year's 1,200,000 tons against 1,070,000 tons. This matter needs immediate attention.

Now, dealing with jute, it is a fact that our money crop in 1940 was the largest sown, the area being 43½ lakhs of acres and the outturn 125½ lakhs of bales. But last year's crop was disappointing—33⅛ lakhs of acres only yielded 90⅝ lakhs of bales and as 90 lakhs of bales were consumed the year before, it will be seen how necessary it is not to reduce our jute crop, the industry on which the prosperity of Bengal depends. Further, America is purchasing large quantities of raw jute as a substitute of manila hemp to manufacture ropes and cordage. We cannot afford to lose this market. Therefore, in allotting only 27 lakhs of acres in Bengal—about 3 lakhs less than last year—we might get 81 lakhs of bales and adding 10 lakhs from the adjoining province we may just get our requirements. The Minister in charge of Industries should be congratulated for assuring the cultivators that if their jute is unsold, the Government will take it over at Rs. 9 per maund, thus protecting the trade and preventing the province from getting into further difficulties as everything depends on our jute crop, the golden fibre of Bengal.

Our food crop, rice, for 1943-44 was a bumper one. This is no reason why we should pay bumper prices in Calcutta. (Laughter.) The crop was anything from 100 to 110 lakhs of tons, all credit to the "Grow More Food" campaign. Yet prices in Calcutta stand as high as as. 6-6 per seer or Rs. 16-4 per maund—over three times more than pre-war rates, the highest ever paid, outside famine conditions. Our population can be reckoned at 5 crores, the increase by evacuees and soldiers being discounted by those who died by the thousand of starvation last year. At 9 chhatacks per head per day our requirements should not exceed 84 lakhs of tons. Rationing in the Calcutta area allows one only 2½ seers of rice per week, the balance 1½ seers being made up of wheat products; so, this should make a further reduction and show a surplus. Therefore, every explanation is necessary for the high prices ruling in Calcutta. Compare the prices in Madras, Cochin, Travancore and Mysore, provinces that used to get rice from Bengal. I understand that prices there do not exceed Rs. 9 per maund. Surely, rationing was not introduced to make provision for the buying agents. Government does not buy petrol or any other commodity to ration it. Again why was not a minimum price fixed for paddy, say, at 50 per cent. more than pre-war rates? The Government set brains and money on one side against ignorance and poverty on the other and the

result has been scandalous. We in Calcutta have to pay Rs. 16-4 per maund for our rice while the cultivator unprotected with an average income of Rs. 5-8 per mensem to get the worst of the deal. The question arises who has made all the money. (Cries of "Hear, hear".) It becomes abundantly clear that rationing was not introduced in Calcutta to keep down prices, but to maintain prices as near as possible with last year's level so that the famine hoarders could average their prices with this year's early purchases at favourable rates and sell out at a profit. Otherwise it is clear that those hoarders would have been ruined. Therefore to protect them it was found necessary that the usual flow into the regular markets was stopped, new shops sprang up overnight, the order of things were changed and to add to confusion worse confounded a most expensive machinery was set up that makes for bribery and corruption with black markets everywhere, the middle class people being served with the worst quality of rice, having to resort to the black market if they wished to live as they were accustomed to. Then when Bengal is bent double with woe and agony through majority rule we are presented with two fresh taxation Bills, the Agricultural Tax and 100 per cent. increase in the Sales Tax to wipe out our budget deficits. We have seen how the European merchant princes of Clive Street, owners of Tea Gardens in Darjeeling, Chittagong, the Terai and the Dooars with the zemindary land at Nadia, Rajshahi, Malda, Murshidabad, Midnapore and Manbhum objected to be taxed when it affected their interest, and walked across to the Opposition to support the Indian zemindars. Therefore how much more should the middle class working people object to the doubling of the Sales Tax, when salaries in most cases are stationary and prices all round are inflated due to our staple crop being handed over to certain buying agents. Why not tax them Re. 1 per maund (Cries of "Hear, hear" from the Opposition benches); they were given ample scope to get the better of the cultivator. The crop is about 30 crores of maunds. Half of this sum will wipe out our budget deficit and straighten up Bengal and cure her of this woe and agony. The question really arises who has made all the profit between producer and consumer. It is futile to close the stable door after the horse has bolted. (Laughter.) It is time the Governor stepped in under section 93 and worked the province with his I.C.S. officials. The Cabinet Ministers could act as an Advisory Board and the Advisory Board should be a representative one of all parties. After all, who is responsible for the mal-administration of Bengal, the Governor or the Legislature? Surely, the Governor. (Applause.)

(At this stage the House was adjourned for 15 minutes.)

(After adjournment.)

Mr. J. R. WALKER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, my friend, Mr. Gladding, in his speech last night gave the general views of this party regarding the Budget. In the course of that speech he said that certain taxes had been diverted from their proper uses and it is on this particular point that I would like to say a few words.

In the Bengal Raw Jute Taxation Act, 1941, it is stated in the Preamble that the tax is "for the purpose of carrying out measures for the stabilisation of jute prices and for furthering the interests of the growers of jute in the province and for the jute industry generally." In the Statement of Objects

and Reasons to the Bill it is stated "in order to finance the carrying out of measures for the stabilisation of jute prices, the improvement of marketing and generally to further the interests of the jute growers of the province, and of the industry as a whole, considerable sums of money are required which cannot be found out of ordinary revenues. The object of this Bill is to provide funds for these purpose—and *it is intended to earmark* the proceeds of this tax for such expenditure".

In this Assembly, the then Government gave even more definite assurances about the tax. The Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy in his reference to the Statement of Objects and Reasons pointed out in this House that it had been clearly indicated that the proceeds of the tax would be definitely earmarked for expenditure in connection with various schemes that have been or may later be undertaken to implement the Government's declared policy in relation to jute. He went on to specify 4 general heads of policy, viz., (1) stabilisation of jute prices at reasonable economic levels, (2) improvement of the conditions under which and the methods by which jute is marketed, (3) improvement of the economic condition of the jute growers in general, and (4) improvement of conditions within the industry for the general welfare of all sections thereof, from the grower to the manufacturer. He went on to state that while it was not possible to foresee what measures may or may not be found necessary he could say that the proceeds of this tax would be specifically earmarked for the carrying out of measures falling within the four big categories I have given. In another place the Hon'ble Minister went even further by assuring the House that the money will be set apart for the benefit of the jute grower, and if in any year there is any surplus it will not merge into the general revenues of the province but it will be set aside as a sort of reserve fund in order to spend it for the benefit of the jute growers. At the time the tax was brought into force Government was spending Rs. 36 lakhs on jute regulation and the tax was primarily intended to pay for this. Government are not now spending more than Rs. 12 lakhs so far as I can ascertain on Jute Regulation and there should, therefore, be a surplus to be paid into the reserve fund for jute schemes. In 1942-43 which is the only year for which we have actuals, receipts from the tax were Rs. 32 lakhs and the expenditure on Jute Regulation appears to have been in the region of Rs. 8 lakhs. There should have been, therefore, a surplus of approximately Rs. 24 lakhs in that year which should have been placed into a reserve fund for jute schemes. I would like to know from the Finance Minister if this reserve fund has been created, and if not, why not. We are opposed to earmarking of taxes in general but this was a special tax for a special purpose and I feel that the House should be told freely and frankly the reasons why the objects of the Raw Jute Taxation Act, 1941, have been ignored in the way they appear to have been.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH SEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is not in any spirit of rank criticism that I rise to speak this afternoon on the Budget estimates as presented by my Hon'ble friend the Finance Minister. The enormity of the deficit which his estimates have disclosed is but a reflection of the extraordinary period through which we have been passing particularly since last year. The revised estimates for the current year put the expenditure at more than Rs. 32 crores but despite the best efforts of the

Government it has not been possible to raise the revenue to more than Rs. 22·44 crores, if we take into account the additional Rs. 1·10 crores which the Finance Minister expects to get from the divisible pool of Central income-tax. As for the next year while expenditure has been placed at Rs. 30·44 crores, receipts are not expected to exceed Rs. 23 crores and we are now facing a deficit of Rs. 7·36 crores next year as against Rs. 10·90 crores this year. The deficit for the next year is of course liable to further reduction because of the amount which the Finance Minister expects to get from the increased return of the Sales Tax and the Agricultural Income-tax. We have however not yet been given any idea as to the probable yield from the additional sources of taxation. In any case, it has to be admitted even by the worst critics of Bengal that despite the deplorable economic conditions through which we are now passing, we have so far stood loyally by the Government and enabled them to raise the total revenue from Rs. 15 crores to more than Rs. 23 crores in the course of four years. Or, in other words, we are now paying more than Rs. 8 crores in the shape of additional taxes and revenues. The Finance Minister has warned us that he may yet be called upon to make further demands on the tax-payers before the year is out. But I would point out that with all the taxes that have so far been imposed, there can hardly be any scope for further taxation.

The great bulk of the people of the province has been made the poorer by the terrible catastrophe of 1943 and even the conditions of traders and merchants of this province are not so enviable as they are in other provinces.

I would, on the other hand, suggest that the Government of Bengal have got a very good case to approach the Central Government for assistance in our hours of trial. We have always been called upon by the Central Government that we must qualify ourselves for assistance from the Centre by making every effort to meet our expenses but now that we have been raising more than 8 or 9 crores revenue over our normal post-Autonomy budgets, I hope the Centre will not look askance at our demands for financial assistance. Unfortunately, however, the efforts of the Ministers to get as much as possible from the Centre have not so far been crowned with all the success that they deserved and we are still being asked to work out our own salvation. I am aware that even the Centre is not without its worries and if Press reports are to be believed there is likely to be huge deficits in the Central budget this year, much more than what was estimated at this time last year. But I would at the same time stress that Bengal being in the War Zone must also be the direct concern of the Government of India and the measures taken by the Government to relieve the economic distress of the people resulting from the famine may properly be regarded as part of the War efforts for which constitutionally the Central Government is responsible. Besides, the famine was also the direct result of the War and there can be no justification for the Centre to repudiate its liability to meet the extraordinary expenses incurred by the Government of Bengal in undertaking relief measures. I have noted from a Press report that in answer to a question in the Council of State the spokesman of the Government of India recently mentioned that the total expenditure charged finally to Indian revenue during the five years 1939-40 to 1943-44 on Defence and Supply services has amounted to about Rs. 800 crores. The amount of

estimated deficit in Bengal in the two years 1943-45 which comes to a little over Rs. 18 crores is nothing compared to this huge amount already charged to the Central Government and I earnestly implore that the Government of Bengal will be able to impress upon the Central Government the need for a more liberal approach to the problem. I also take this opportunity of appealing to my friends of the European group to join in this demand for a larger subvention from the Centre. The European group holds a great influence both with the Centre as well as with His Majesty's Government in England. So if they also join with us in this demand it will be very difficult for the Centre to resist this united demand. Like the children of the soil they also would not like to see the province collapse while the war in the East is being carried on from Bengal as the main base of operation. I hope my appeal to them will not go in vain.

There is another aspect of the problem to which I would like to refer before I take my seat. I have already referred that the increase in the Revenue expenditure during the last four years has been almost staggering, from Rs. 15 crores to Rs. 30 crores or, on the other hand, a cent per cent. increase. I quite appreciate that the circumstances through which we are now passing call for extraordinary expenditure but a cent per cent. increase in the expenditure over a period of four years is in itself a very serious matter calling for a very careful scrutiny over every item of expenditure. It may be pertinent to enquire whether these deficits could have been brought down to lower levels by a policy of judicious expenditure designed to produce the maximum effect. We have grave doubts as to whether all extraordinary expenditures of the Government have been incurred with an eye to such an object. Allegations are not lacking that of the total expenditure incurred for civil defence, famine relief and "Grow More Food" campaign, the major portion is being swallowed up in paying fat salaries and emoluments to Government officers, with the consequence that the people of the Province are not having the maximum benefit out of these expenditures. I am not sure how far these allegations are correct but I hope that the Finance Minister will give us an assurance that avoidable expenses are not being incurred.

But even apart from the cases of extravagance I have to point out that the policy which the Government have been following in the matter of procurement and distribution of rice is bound to lead to unnecessary expenditure. It is unfortunate that they have persistently refused to utilise the normal channels of trade to the utmost and have also unceremoniously rejected the various suggestions, which, we, on behalf of the commercial communities often made to them. I am quite sure that if the Government had acted on our advice they could have avoided much of the expenses which they have incurred during the current year and expect to incur in the next year.

Sir, I close with a very brief reference to the very noble sentiment expressed by my friend the Finance Minister towards the end of his speech. He has very rightly laid an emphasis on the nation-building activities of the Government but I regret very much to note a disparity between his action and profession. The Budget speech he has presented is a close indication of the Government to stay all the nation-building schemes, and all the taxes he and his predecessor had imposed and all that he threatens to impose in

the near future lose all their justification for the betterment of the economic and social condition of the people. Now in the absence of any scheme formulated by the Government I only wish that his admirable peroration formed the entire background of his entire budget in which case people would have some satisfaction that the sacrifices made by them in the form of increased taxation were really worth while.

Mr. UPENDRA NATH BARMAN: Sir, the Budget for the year 1944-45 has been laid on the table which the Hon'ble the Finance Minister has presented us with a speech. I shall only refer to some of the items and some of the figures that are included in the Budget and in the Budget speech of the Hon'ble the Finance Minister.

The Hon'ble the Finance Minister says that about one-half of the expenditure is due to three items, namely, the Extraordinary charges in India, Famine and Agriculture. On page 2 of his speech there is a line, namely, "This provision", that is, provision for extraordinary charges, "is not expected to cover the further losses with which we shall undoubtedly be faced one day—shortages, damaged stocks and unsaleable stocks". If I am right in reading these lines, the losses on account of these three items have not been duly foreseen in the Budget. Then the conclusion is that the deficit that the Hon'ble the Finance Minister shows in the Budget estimate will be much more than that. In this connection I would like to draw the attention of the Hon'ble the Finance Minister and of the Government of the day to one circumstance. There is a rumour afloat that during the last *aus* season Government purchased huge stocks and they stacked these stocks of paddy on station platforms. As they did not make proper arrangements for carrying those stocks to proper places those huge stocks of paddy have been wasted by being allowed to rot on the station platforms. If that be the fact then certainly Government cannot have any excuse for further losses under the head—damaged stocks and unsaleable stocks. I would request the Government to see that if such things occurred in the past they do not occur in future.

Another fact is that, due to want of proper care and arrangement, large stocks of rice have been wasted last year. While people were dying out of hunger, being stricken with famine, Government withheld that rice and wasted it incurring further losses to the revenue of the province. These things are very unsatisfactory.

Coming to the head "Famine" I have only one observation to make on it. It is a grievance amongst the Scheduled Castes that the committees that have been formed by the Government for distribution of relief did not include representatives of the Scheduled Castes. As a result of that the Scheduled Castes got only third consideration in the matter of relief distribution. Many communities amongst the Scheduled Castes, specially the fishermen community have died in families of thousands and in seriously affected areas they have been wiped out from the face of the earth. I would request the Government of the day to see that in the matter of distribution of relief the Scheduled Castes' cause be not neglected in this way.

As regards budgeted expenditure on agriculture I have got one comment to make. We are all along complaining that the budgeted sum under this

head is quite inadequate. Whatever sum is budgeted is spent up by the department in salaries, in superintendence and maintenance and other things and very little is left with which to improve agriculture in general. Our point is that while 80 per cent. of the people of Bengal are agriculturists and they furnish the wealth of this province they should not be neglected in this way. The Hon'ble the Finance Minister is going to get passed by this House another legislation, namely, Agricultural Income-tax Bill. We would have been quite glad to support this taxation measure had the money realised out of this taxation measure been earmarked, or at least 50 per cent. of it had been earmarked for the improvement of agriculture. If the existing budgeted figure could have been swelled up by the new revenue out of the Agricultural Income-tax, then the Agriculture Department would have got some scope to help the agriculturists in the matter of cultivation.

Next I come to the Scheduled Castes Education Fund. From the very beginning the demand of the Scheduled Caste members in this House and outside had been that five lakhs of rupees should be provided as a recurring grant under the head of "Scheduled Castes Education". We are convinced that unless the Scheduled Castes can better their lot in the matter of education their amelioration cannot be effected. This year we find that five lakhs have been provided for but when we go through the items that have been given in the Red Book we find that this is not a recurring grant at all. In the past also we had got lump grant of five lakhs and our bitter experience is that this five lakhs was not spent in one year but it was going to be spent in many years The same story is going to be repeated also this year. Out of the five lakhs provided in the budget the Red Book shows that about 3 lakhs 13 thousand have been provided for construction of hostels, schools, etc. I am definite that as there is difficulty about materials for the purpose of construction work this sum will not be spent in the coming year. Last year we had another bitter experience and we deplore that the present Ministry, although they promised to give with this five lakhs all facilities to the Scheduled Castes in the matter of education, went the other way. Formerly, deserving boys reading in class VII to class X were given stipends and a sum was provided for that purpose. Due to a circular from the Education Department this year only 15 per cent. of the number of boys reading in from class VII to class X were awarded stipends, and I think from most of the divisions 50 per cent. of the money had been refunded. These things are most unsatisfactory.

Under the Capital head 85-A I shall mention only one item, namely, salt. Due to the negligence or rather mismanagement on the part of the Civil Supplies Department the present condition is that in the rural area salt has almost vanished. In the black market salt is selling at a price ranging from Re. 1 to Rs. 2 or more, per seer. It is only a favoured few who can purchase at such a high price and the ordinary people, the poorer section are going without salt for weeks together. Their vitality is deteriorating and they are becoming so much disgusted that they are accusing not only the Bengal Government but also the British Government. Their complaint is that salt is such a necessary of life——

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Sir, is there quorum in the House?

(After counting it was found that there was no quorum. The bell rang and there was no quorum still.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Barman, there is no quorum. You better continue tomorrow.

The House stands adjourned till 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Adjournment.

The House was accordingly adjourned at 7-20 p.m. till 10 a.m. on Saturday, the 26th February, 1944, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Saturday, the 26th February, 1944, at 10 a.m.

Present:

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY) in the Chair, 10 Hon'ble Ministers and 155 members.

STARRED QUESTION

(to which oral answer was given)

Expenditure incurred in giving relief to people of Damodar flood areas.

***122. Mr. ADWAITA KUMAR MAJI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department be pleased to lay on the Table a statement showing up to September, 1943, in connection with the relief measures in places affected by the Damodar Flood

(*a*) the total expenditure incurred in each centre (to be shown separately);

(*b*) the quantity of—

(*i*) rice,

(*ii*) *cheera*,

(*iii*) *Gur*, and

(*iv*) other eatables

supplied there;

(*c*) the amount of—

(*i*) contingencies, and

(*ii*) travelling allowance of officers,

(*d*) the quantities of rice that have been—

(*i*) taken from the evacuees stores, and

(*ii*) purchased by the Government;

(*e*) the number of recipients of Government help for the last two weeks in each flood relief centre as entered in the Muster Roll;

(*f*) the number of relief officers engaged in the work of flood relief; and

(*g*) (*i*) total amount of money, and

(*ii*) total quantity of rice

advanced by the Government for relief work.

MINISTER in charge of the REVENUE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Tarak Nath Mukerjea): (*a*) A statement is laid on the Table.

		md.	sr.	ch.
(*b*)	(*i*)	9,352	12	5
	(*ii*)	94	12	2
	(*iii*)	12	18	8
	(*iv*)	10	11	11

(*c*) (*i*) Rs.22,000.

(*ii*) Rs.1,052-15.

(*d*) (*i*) 1,309 md. 20 sr.

(*ii*) 8,841 md. 36 sr. 6 ch.

(*e*) 58,683.

(*f*) Twenty-eight.

(*g*) (*i*) Over Rs.3 lakhs.

(*ii*) 10,151 md. 16 sr. 6 ch.

Statement referred to in clause (a) of starred question No. 122.

For Sadar subdivision only (up to September, 1943).

Serial No.	Name of the flood relief centre.	The total expenditure incurred. Rs.	a.	p.
1	Nabasta	8,835	3	0
2.	Guskara	12,795	15	0
3	Gope Gunter	17,269	14	0
4.	Bohar	5,332	14	0
5.	Parhati	6,231	15	0
6.	Bara Palasan	3,652	9	6
7.	Majher Gram	6,630	1	6
8.	Palgram	8,521	6	6
9	Amadpur	20,819	0	6
10.	Nimu	24,074	4	0
11.	Mahata	3,320	0	6
12.	Bharenda	6,240	0	0
13.	Kasiara	15,398	1	0
14.	Bhedia	10,174	3	6
15.	Ukta	10,054	15	6
16.	Debipur	15,003	3	9
17.	Joteram	4,933	2	0
18.	Memari	19,989	14	9
19.	Dalui Bazar A	13,683	2	0
20.	Dalui Bazar B	4,768	6	6
21.	Bijur A	7,975	4	0
22.	Bijur B	2,857	8	0
23.	Kuchut A	16,161	8	9
24.	Kuchut B	7,418	4	0
25.	Barsul A	4,461	4	0
26.	Barsul B	8,513	5	6
27.	Satgachhia A	5,811	0	9
28	Satgachhia B	6,524	11	6
29.	Kalna Road	4,879	9	3
	Total	2,82,330	12	3

(price of foodstuffs) *plus* cash total Rs 5,085-14.

Mr. ADWAITA KUMAR MAJI : মাননীয় মন্ত্রী মহাশয়, দয়া করে বোলবেন কি ঐ যে ১ লক্ষ টাকা খরচ দেখিয়েছেন তা শুধু সদর মহকুমার জন্য, না সমস্ত বন্যাবিধ্বস্ত অঞ্চলের জন্য ?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA : সমস্ত বন্যাবিধ্বস্ত অঞ্চলের জন্য।

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(answers to which were laid on the table)

Appointments in Publicity Department.

48. Mr. HEM CHANDRA NASKER: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Publicity Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) how many appointments have been made in his department since the formation of the present Ministry; and

(*ii*) how many of them belong to—

(1) Caste Hindus,

(2) Scheduled Castes, and

(3) Muslims?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether there is any advisory committee to recommend the appointments?

(*c*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the name of the members of the advisory committee?

MINISTER in charge of the PUBLICITY DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Pulin Behari Mullick): (*a*)(*i*) 17.

(*ii*)(1) 6, (2) 3, (3) 8.

(*b*) No. Selection committees are, however, constituted if and when occasion arises.

(*c*) Does not arise.

Family allowance of certain security prisoners.

49. Mr. ISWAR CHANDRA MAL: (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Political) Department aware that—

(*i*) Babu Bipin Behari Adhikari, a pleader of Contai, district Midnapore, now a security prisoner arrested on the 23rd December, 1942, applied for a monthly allowance on 5th January, 1943;

(*ii*) Babu Ramkrishna Das, district Bankura, a security prisoner arrested on the 7th September, 1943, applied for a monthly allowance on 4th March, 1943;

(*iii*) Babu Atuleswar Sarker, district Tippera, a security prisoner arrested on the 30th December, 1942, applied for a monthly allowance on 20th March, 1943,

(*iv*) Babu Anil Krishna Mukherjee, Bankura, a security prisoner arrested on the 2nd April, 1943, applied on the 14th May, 1943, for a monthly allowance;

(*v*) all the aforesaid prisoners are detained in the Midnapore Central Jail?

(*b*) If the answers to (*a*)(*i*) and (*ii*) are in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the steps taken by the Government on the applications of the aforesaid prisoners?

(*c*) If the answers to (*a*)(*i*) and (*ii*) are in the negative, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of granting a suitable allowance to the aforesaid prisoners from the dates of their arrest in view of the abnormal economic situation?

MINISTER in charge of the HOME DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) Yes; but the petition, dated the 4th March, 1943, of Babu Ramkrishna Das was not received by Government

(*b*) An allowance of Rs.50 has been granted to Babu Bepin Behari Adhikari with effect from 23rd December, 1942. Babu Ramkrishna Das has provisionally been granted a family allowance of Rs.30 with effect from the 22nd October, 1942.

(*c*) Does not arise.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: On a point of information, Sir. I first want to ask the Hon'ble Minister whether he wants to make a statement about the maintenance of families of security prisoners. We could not understand the policy of Government. There was a statement made by Government that allowances will be doubled, but in some cases we find the allowances are not doubled.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you want to know whether the Hon'ble Minister will make any statement or not, you put a supplementary question to that effect and try to elicit information.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Sir, the Hon'ble Minister told the House that he would make a statement on the policy of Government about the maintenance of the families of security prisoners.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What am I to do? Do you want me to hold this question over

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Sir, I want to know through you from the Hon'ble Minister whether he is going to make any such statement

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The Hon'ble Minister will make a statement very shortly.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us if Government granted any allowance to Babu Atuleswar Sarker and Babu Anil Krishna Mukherjee

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: An allowance of Rs 25 was sanctioned to Babu Atuleswar Sarker, but no allowance was sanctioned to Babu Anil Krishna Mukherjee, as he had no income of his own before his arrest. Both of them have since been released.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us the date from which he was granted the allowance?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Babu Atuleswar Sarker was granted an allowance for the whole period of his detention.

Fixation of price of jute.

50. Mr. HEM CHANDRA NASKER: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Commerce, Labour and Industries Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) the acres of land under cultivation of jute in this Province;

(*ii*) the present market price of jute; and

(*iii*) whether the Government have fixed the—

(1) maximum, and

(2) minimum

prices of jute?

(*b*) Is it a fact that the Government of India is restricting the price of jute instead of allowing it to be fixed by the rule of demand and supply through normal trade channel?

(*c*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps are being taken by him to ensure a fair price of jute?

MINISTER in charge of the COMMERCE, LABOUR and INDUSTRIES DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. K. Shahabuddin): (*a*)(*i*) The acreage under jute in Bengal in 1943 was 2,146,000 acres.

(*ii*) The present market price of Indian Jat Middles in Calcutta is Rs.15-12 per maund.

(*iii*) The arrangements with the Government of India as to maximum and minimum prices were announced in a Government press note on the 7th February.

(*b*) No. The maximum price fixed by the Government of India was above the current market price at the time.

(*c*) The steps taken were announced on the 7th February.

Agricultural Development officers.

51. Mr. TARINI CHARAN PRAMANIK: Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Agriculture Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) the present number of District Agricultural Development officers; and

(*b*) the number of them who are—

(1) Muslims,

(2) Caste Hindus, and

(3) Scheduled Castes; and

(*c*) whether Communal Ratio has been maintained in those posts?

MINISTER in charge of the AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed Muazzamuddin Hosain): (*a*) Twenty-eight.

(*b*) Muslims	14
Caste Hindus	11
Scheduled Castes	3

(*c*) Yes, as far as possible.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to explain the duties and functions of the newly started Department of Agricultural Development?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: As the name itself indicates, it is for the development of agriculture. Its function is to do propaganda and to see that actual work is done in connection with the Grow More Food Campaign.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to explain whether these things are being done by the Agriculture Department itself and the Jute Regulation Department concerned?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: No. The Agriculture Department is not doing these things, but they have been placed under the charge of District Agricultural Development Officers.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Will the Hon'ble Minister please tell the House who is the Commissioner of the Agricultural Land Development?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is in the Civil List.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Sir, my point is that competent officers hold many offices. I want to get it from Government.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Will the Hon'ble Minister please tell the House whether this Commissioner of Land Development holds 5 or 6 other responsible posts under Government?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Just at present there is no Development Commissioner, because the officer who was employed as Development Commissioner is now officiating as Secretary to the Government of Bengal in the Agriculture Department. The last officer was the Director of Land Records and also in addition to his duties held the post of Development Commissioner.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: The Hon'ble Minister has just now stated that the "Grow More Food Campaign" will be part of the duties of the newly created Department. Is he in a position to give the House an indication of the kind of campaign that this department will carry on?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: The Agriculture Department has been issuing propaganda papers for a very long time. The principal duty of the new Development Commissioner is to see that these instructions are translated into action and that things actually materialise. Under him is placed the Jute Regulation staff and through them he sees what area is actually brought under cultivation, what second and third crops are grown in these areas, what manure is given and how the crop of the country is improved and increased. We want to get these things done through him.

Want of cattle for agricultural purpose.

52. Mr. HEM CHANDRA NASKER: (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Agriculture Department aware of the cattle epidemic now prevailing in the Province?

(*b*) Is it a fact that want of cattle for agricultural purposes is being felt throughout the Province?

(*c*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps are being taken by him in the matter?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) Yes, particularly in the districts of Faridpur, Bakarganj, and Noakhali.

(*c*) Government is seriously considering the question of replenishing the plough cattle in the badly affected areas and the matter is now before the Cabinet.

Supply of medicines to Government, district board and municipal dispensaries.

53. Mr. HEM CHANDRA NASKER: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to state whether all Government, district board and municipal dispensaries are equipped with necessary medicines?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the negative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state, what steps, if any, Government are taking or propose to take to equip these dispensaries with the necessary medicines?

MINISTER in charge of the PUBLIC HEALTH and LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi Jalaluddin Ahmad): (*a*) All Government dispensaries are equipped with such necessary drugs as are available. Government are not responsible for supply of drugs to district board and municipal dispensaries.

(*b*) Does not arise

Scheme for reorganisation of Rural Public Health Service.

54. Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department aware that—

(*i*) the Director of Public Health formulated a scheme of reorganisation of Rural Public Health Services for the Province of Bengal in 1940,

(*ii*) Dr. A. C. Ukil evolved another scheme on the same subject in his Presidential Address at the Section of Medical and Veterinary Research of the 28th Indian Science Congress held at Benares in 1941; and

(*iii*) the Bengal Provincial Branch of the Indian Medical Association appointed an expert committee consisting of Dr A. C. Ukil, Dr K. S Roy, Dr M N Ahmad, Dr P K Guha, Dr. A. D. Mukherji, the Director of Public Health and others to study the official and non-official schemes with a view to formulate a fairly comprehensive scheme suited to the present economic conditions of the Province?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he had recently received a resolution passed at the last Provincial Medical Conference which was inaugurated by him in December, 1942, and in which the Government of Bengal were urged to launch the Indian Medical Association scheme in the so-called safer zones and especially in the cyclone-affected districts of the Province?

(*c*) If the answers to clauses (*a*) and (*b*) are in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to lay on the Table a summary of the schemes referred to above?

(*d*) If the answers to clauses (*a*) and (*b*) are in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he intends to launch such a scheme from the next financial year in consultation with the elected representatives of the Bengal Provincial Branch of the Indian Medical Association which is recognised by the Government of Bengal as the representative Medical Organisation of the Province?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: (*a*) and (*b*) Yes.

(*c*) The honourable member is referred to pages 4-18 of the Red Book containing the scheme of the Director of Public Health, Bengal, pages 46-55 of Dr. Ukil's Presidential Address delivered at the 28th Indian Science Congress held in Benares in 1941 and pages 8-12 of the pamphlet containing the scheme of the Indian Medical Association. Copies of the Red Book and the pamphlets are laid on the Library Table.

(*d*) The matter is still under the consideration of Government.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The unstarred question No. 55 is held over as the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy is not here.

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Registration of deaths from starvation cases in mufassil districts.

***128. Dr. SANAULLAH:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department aware that all starvation cases in mufassil districts are recorded in the Death Register under the head "Other causes" in accordance with the instructions of the local Circle Officers?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason therefor?

(*c*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the negative, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of issuing orders to all Circle Officers to get the starvation cases recorded either in a special column to be temporarily prepared or in "Other causes" column with the mark "S" in order to distinguish it from real "Other causes"?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi Jalaluddin Ahmad): (*a*) and (*b*) I have no information.

(*c*) Yes.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: In answer (*a*) and (*b*), the Hon'ble Minister states that he has no information. Will he be pleased to tell the House whether he is aware under what head these starvation cases are put?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: In the Chaukidari Register there is no such column as "Death due to starvation". There is a column called "Other causes" and these things are entered there.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Sir, I submit that my question has not been answered. He says that he is not aware, that he has no information that starvation cases are put under "Other causes". Is he aware under what head these cases are put?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: Under "Other causes".

Mr. SHAHEDALI: With reference to answer (*a*) and (*b*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he tried to get any information?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: There is a proposal under consideration of Government whether an additional column may be added to the register where such cases can be entered.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: He has not answered my question, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I cannot help you.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: My question is whether he has tried to get any information.

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: There are some cases of death due to starvation, but there is no column in the register to enter such cases.

It is now under contemplation whether a separate column can be added to the register.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: From the manner in which so long starvation cases have been put, is the Government in a position to ascertain the number of total deaths that have occurred so far due to starvation?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: No, Sir. It is a very difficult thing because the chaukidars are the persons who report deaths and it is not at all safe to give them the authority to find out the real causes of death. They are non-medical men, and they are not, therefore, expected to report correctly what deaths are due to.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Government consider the desirability of taking proper and necessary steps to enquire by all legitimate means as to the number of deaths which have occurred so far in Bengal due to starvation?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: Circulars have been issued to Circle Officers for entering such cases of death due to other causes with the indication of "S".

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: I take it that these circulars refer to deaths that will happen, but will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether those circulars had any reference to deaths that had already taken place?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: No

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: May I take it then that Government is not in a position to give the number of deaths that had occurred from starvation?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: No.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when the circular was issued?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: After this thing was brought to the notice of Government.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the Government at any time supplied mortality figures in this respect to any authority whatsoever in India or outside?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: I want notice

Development of Bengal's Fisheries.

*127. **Mr. J. R. WALKER:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Agriculture Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) what staff has been sanctioned for the Department of Fisheries since the appointment of the Director of Fisheries in 1942; and

(*ii*) what staff has actually been recruited?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be also pleased to state—

(*i*) whether the development of Bengal's Fisheries has been made part of the "Grow More Food" campaign;

(*ii*) what schemes have been sanctioned for the development of Bengal's Fisheries; and

(*iii*) what steps have been taken to increase the supply of fish to Calcutta from the Sundarbans?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: (*a*) (*i*) (1) Technical staff—

four District Fishery Officers,

five Field Assistants, and

(2) Non-technical staff—

one Head Clerk,

one Stenographer,

two Clerks, and

one Typist.

(*ii*) All the staff except two District Fishery Officers has been recruited. Steps are being taken to recruit candidates for the remaining posts.

(*b*) (*i*) Yes, it has been recently so made.

(*ii*) A small experimental scheme for the improvement of preserved fish industry of Bengal has been started with the aid of Imperial Council of Agricultural Research from the 4th January, 1944. Several other schemes such as growing of fish in paddy fields, free distribution of fish fry and granting loans for improvement of tanks are under consideration

(*iii*) The following steps for increasing the fish-supply from the Sundarbans were taken:—

(1) Relaxation of restrictions under the denial policy

(2) Experiments and propaganda on a limited scale were undertaken with a view to extending Carp culture in the Sundarban *abads*, both in paddy fields and in extensive *khals* and tanks.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us when these four District Fishery Officers were appointed?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Only two have been appointed, and two have not yet been appointed.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: When have they been appointed?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Some six months ago.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us where these District Fishery Officers have been located?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: They have not been sent to any district. They are directly under the Director of Fisheries. They are sent out from time to time wherever their services are necessary.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Government as part of their "Grow More Fish Campaign" consider the desirability of taking immediate steps for the rehabilitation of the fishermen class who, as is well known, is a dying race due to starvation?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Rehabilitation of the fishermen class is not the subject under the Fisheries Department. There is a separate department altogether. I am unable to give any answer to this question.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: It is nobody's business

Babu MADHUSUDAN SARKAR: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he is aware that unless the fishermen are given permanent rights in fisheries no scheme for extension of the fishery rights will be of any use to the people?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: These matters will be considered. We are considering the question of bringing in a Fisheries Bill and at that time all these matters will be considered.

Babu MADHUSUDAN SARKAR: When can we expect the Fishery Bill in this House?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: You cannot expect it very soon. It has just been ordered to be drafted.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister consider the desirability of referring to the appropriate department to see what steps are taken for the rehabilitation of the dying fishermen class?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does that question arise out of that, because he has already stated that it is not this department which is dealing with that question?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he will consider the desirability of referring the matter to the appropriate department?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how much public money has been spent over the Department of Fisheries since 1942 and with what result?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: The honourable member may be referred to the Budget. I think it is about Rs. 54,000.

Babu MADHUSUDAN SARKAR: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what are the functions of the District Fishery Officers?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur SAIYED MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: They are now going about the districts to find out what possibilities there are for increasing the production of fish They are now touring in two districts. In the Tippera district, which is one of the two, they are going about and finding out whether fish culture in the tanks which are now, in existence in large number in that district, can be taken up on an extensive scale.

Immersion of Hindu images at Matiabruz.

***128. Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRY:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether any immersion of Hindu images has been held up in 1943 in the Matiabruz area in 24-Parganas district?

(*b*) If the reply to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the circumstances under which the immersion could not take place?

(*c*) Is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of removing the new restrictions imposed on Hindu worshippers?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: (*a*) No.

(*b*) and (*c*) Do not arise.

Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if the images of goddess Kali worshipped during the last Kali Puja festival have not yet been immersed?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Processions were not taken out but they were not prevented from being taken out.

Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: Is it not a fact that immersion could not take place because of the fact that restrictions had been imposed upon processions?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I would refer the honourable member to my answer. I maintain that the processions were not stopped but they were voluntarily not taken out.

Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is aware that images of Durga and Lakshmi were immersed without any new conditions being imposed but during the time of the immersion of the image of Kali certain new restrictions were imposed and it was due to that that the processionists, as a mark of protest, did not take out the procession, and actually eight images of goddess Kali are still there lying without immersion?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: That may be so, but there was no stoppage from Government; voluntarily they did not take out the procession.

Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: Sir, my question is, why were certain new restrictions imposed?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Because the District Officer considered it necessary to impose certain restrictions for the time being.

Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: Is it a fact that the restrictions imposed by the Deputy Commissioner of Police, South, were not imposed by the District Magistrate of 24-Parganas, though the processions had to pass through both the areas under the jurisdiction of the Calcutta Police as well as of the District Magistrate?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I understand that the arrangements were made and permissions were given in consultation and in agreement between the Deputy Commissioner of Police, South, and the District Magistrate of 24-Parganas.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Government be pleased to consider now the desirability of withdrawing the restrictions and allowing the immersion to be held as it used to be on previous occasions?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: The policy of Government with regard to these questions is that they have laid on the procedure for appeal and unless and until these procedures are exhausted, Government do not interfere. If any party is aggrieved with the decision of the District Magistrate or of any local authority, he has got the right to appeal to the

Commissioner of the Division, and if he is dissatisfied with the decision of the Commissioner he can approach the Government, and then and then only Government will interfere. Until these steps have been exhausted, Government do not propose to interfere in the matter.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: May we enquire what are the new restrictions and conditions that were imposed?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I believe, it was with regard to carrying of *lathis* in the case of one procession over a limited area.

Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that immediately after the Durga Puja a conference was held in which it was decided to grant a licence without any restrictions but in respect of the Kali Puja these decisions were not observed by the Deputy Commissioner of Police, South, as a result of which the procession could not be taken out?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: It is quite possible, but I do not know the details of the matter and I do not propose to enter into the details. As I have already stated, if any party has got any grievance against any order passed by the local officer, they have got the power to appeal to the Commissioner of the Division and if they are dissatisfied with the decision of the Commissioner, they can appeal to the Government, and then and then only Government will look into the matter.

UNSTARRED QUESTION

(answer to which was laid on the table)

Number of deaths from cholera and malaria in the Contai and Tamluk subdivisions, Midnapore.

56. Mr. ISWAR CHANDRA MAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Public Health and Local Self-Government Department be pleased to lay on the Table a statement showing up to the 20th June, 1943 —

(*a*) the total number of deaths from—

(*i*) Cholera, and

(*ii*) Malaria,

in the subdivisions of Contai and Tamluk in the district of Midnapore after the great cyclone;

(*b*) the steps, if any, taken by the Government to tackle the situation; and

(*c*) the steps, if any, taken by the Government in the nature of preventives for future recurrence?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: (*a*)—

	(*i*) Cholera.	(*ii*) Malaria.
Contai	... 744	2,503
Tamluk	... 1,390	1,738

(*b*) Special staff were appointed for public health and medical relief, to treat the sick and to carry out inoculations and to disinfect rooms and water-supplies.

(c) No special preventive measures against malaria are practicable: as the commonest cause of cholera is drinking impure water, Government have arranged for all tube-wells in Midnapore district to be put into working order.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: With reference to answer (c), are we to take it that as there are no special preventive measures against malaria, as Government thinks, Government will remain idle while people will die in their hundreds and thousands?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is a matter of opinion.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: With reference to answer (c), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what preventive measures against malaria are practicable?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: I have already said that no special preventive measures against malaria are practicable.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it has been the policy of Government to supply sufficient quantity of quinine as an anti-malarial measure?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: Sufficient quantity of quinine was supplied to the affected area.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: When was quinine supplied this year?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: I cannot give the exact date from which the supply of quinine actually started

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that malaria is a preventible disease and that in many foreign countries malaria has actually been altogether removed?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: So far it has been found that the only preventive measure is to totally destroy the mosquitoes.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that anti-malarial pills are now available in the market and that those anti-malarial pills are taken as a preventive against malaria?

Khan Sahib HAMIDUDDIN AHMAD: Not that I am aware of.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE BUDGET.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Barman, before the House was adjourned last evening you were in possession of the House and I will allow you five minutes now to conclude your speech

Mr. UPENDRA NATH BARMAN: Sir, I reiterate what I stated yesterday that the shortage of salt in the rural areas is causing much anxiety. People in rural areas suspect that Government are not so much anxious for the benefit of the rural people as they are for urban or city people. To my mind, Sir, Government would do well if they would ration salt just as they are rationing kerosene and other commodities and do that with the help of union boards, for union board members are able to create better confidence in the minds of the rural people than what Government officials can do. That being the position even if there be at any time

shortage in the supply of salt, union board members will be able to convince the rural people more than Government officials that there is actual shortage of salt. In this connection I should mention another important factor that this shortage in the supply of salt is undermining the morale of the rural people, that is, of the Home Front, and that those who are neglecting the supply of this simple commodity in the matter of its proper distribution are neglecting and jeopardising the cause of war. Just before I started for Calcutta I had been to rural areas when people of all grades came to me and complained about the shortage in the supply of salt. One village pandit lectured before me for half an hour. By the bye, he mentioned the case of Russia. He said, in his opinion, Germany is now being forced to withdraw from the Russian soil because the Russian people denied them all sorts of help and food. He repeated that if the Government mind for the happiness and welfare of the rural population and the rural people remain satisfied and if at any time the Japanese venture to invade the soil of India, they will meet with the same fate as has been meted out to the Germans on the Russian soil. So, the thing is not so simple as it seems to be. By neglecting this important item in the poor man's food, we are neglecting the cause of the war.

Sir, next I come to another item. Towards the end of his speech, the Hon'ble Finance Minister has warned us that there may be further taxation measures before the year runs out. I thank him for administering this caution. He adumbrates in the same breath that "taxation is a social and national policy" and that "State is service". We look askance at him. Does he mean to say that he is determined to render service to the poor and the afflicted province of Bengal by imposing taxation measures one after another in order to fill up the provincial coffer to pay up the expenditure that has been incurred on account of the war? Is it not a fact that had there been no war, Bengal would not have been afflicted with this serious famine? In the year 1942 there was a stoppage of supply of rice from Burma. There was enormous consumption on the soil of Bengal by the military garrisons and by other services connected with the war. In addition to that, the Central Government rather forced the province of Bengal to allow exports to South Africa and to the Middle East. Bengal was rather forced to do her duty at that time of emergency. Now as that calamity has much softened down, is it not proper for the Central Government to compensate the loss that has been caused to the province by the visitation of this serious famine and which has entailed expenditure under the two heads, viz., Extraordinary charges in India and Famine? I hope that the Hon'ble Finance Minister would do proper service to the province by claiming on the Centre to compensate the province of Bengal for expenditure incurred on account of the war.

Next, Sir, the Hon'ble Finance Minister deals with inflation of currency. In this connection he has said that the inflated prices of commodities might remain for some time till after the end of the hostilities. In this connection I should ask the Hon'ble Finance Minister and the Ministry of the day to consider one important factor. There is a loud cry from all sides against agriculturists and their agricultural product—rice. I do not contend

for a moment that the price of rice should be allowed to soar as high as possible—I do not say that. But I want to impress upon the Government this fact that most of the agriculturists have very little to sell but they have to purchase other commodities of life and necessities. Government has established a perfect machinery with the help of which they can force down the price of rice to any level. I ask them to consider that if the price of rice is forced down to such a level as would make it an uneconomic level, it would mean disaster to the agriculturists because they have to purchase other necessaries of life. On the other hand, I would ask Government to fix a minimum price for paddy and rice and they should try their utmost to bring down the prices of other commodities side by side and as they succeed in other fields, they may gradually diminish the minimum prices fixed. If that process be adopted, there would be no cause of grievance in any quarter.

Last of all, Sir, the Hon'ble Finance Minister has pointed out the necessity of rehabilitation. That is the most important necessity of the day. He has not given us sufficient details as to how he likes to proceed. We shall watch with interest as to how he deals with this important matter.

Mrs. NELLIE SEN GUPTA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wish to say a few words about this budget. First of all I do not agree with Mr. Gladding when he says that famine was inevitable. A famine of the magnitude which came over Bengal could certainly have been prevented to some extent and I do feel that the famine was due to absolute lack of foresight and thoughtlessness amounting to callousness. It did not come as a blight in a day or a week or a month. It took many months to come and for how many months we were begging of the Government to do something to help these poor people who knew that in a few days or weeks they would be starving. I sometimes feel if these poor people had not rushed into Calcutta as they did and were not a menace to the citizens and to the Government and the Army who were in Calcutta their plight might not even have been noticed.

Then again I want to speak about the number of deaths which are published. One wonders sometimes when one sees the list of the number of deaths. I know for a fact that in Patya when the district board officer was asked why he had reported so few deaths, just a few of the number who died in the town, he said "How can I publish so many?" I say, when you are spending so much money why don't you have reliable people to give these figures? With a clerk's pay as large as Rs. 15 and the chowkidar's pay Rs. 5 a month how do you expect to get true and proper figures from these people?

Then again I want more co-operation of relief centres with Government. It is not possible for the Government to see and to know these people individually as boys and people who work in relief centres do know them, and I will give just one instance. When we were distributing we were very careful about the receipts but even then sometimes mistakes might happen, and on two occasions we found a woman coming a second time for a *saree*. No one had noticed—I had not—but one of the workers said "Didn't you come the other day for a *saree*?" She said "I did, I wanted two", and this must have happened many times. We have not enough materials to give two to one person and one has to be very careful.

Another thing I found. I fully understand that the tempers and nerves of the officials, specially the medical officers, must have been most strained, but I did find that they were inclined to blame these poor people for the conditions of their starving and their terrible plight.

Then I come to the question of political prisoners. Even now I am daily getting letters from people who receive no allowances whatever and also from others who receive very small allowances. I am told that a great deal of it depends upon the Magistrate of the district. I do not expect the Magistrate to know every prisoner or every internee in the district, but surely if he has not the time he should have an assistant who can deal with these things.

Sir, I will give one instance. A very elderly friend of mine in the district of Chittagong was interned. I wrote, he wrote so that the internment order might be relaxed, but as usual nothing happened. Then one day the Magistrate went and saw the internee. The interned gentleman who was a member of the District Board said to him: "I want to resign my office" and the Magistrate asked: "Why? You are a very useful member of the District Board." He said: "What is the use of my being useful as I cannot attend meetings of the District Board?" The Magistrate asked him why. He said: "Because I have been interned." The Magistrate said: "But you are a very old man" and immediately his internment order was relaxed.

Sir, I am sure there are many such victims. I do say, Sir, release these young men whom you have kept interned year after year. You can keep a supervision over them; you can see what they are doing. There are hundreds of interned Congress men, young and old in the district of Chittagong, who can help us in our relief work. Why are you keeping them interned? Release them and give them some chance to see what to do in their lives. I do feel, Sir, that the way you are keeping these young men interned year after year is altogether wrong. No one listens to them; no one listens to what we say, but I beg of you to allow these youngmen to come out and give them a chance to work for their country. As I have said already, the money you spend for their meagre allowances and for their food in the jails is quite insufficient. Try to make them trustworthy people; keep a watch over them and see that they do not do what you feel is wrong.

With these words, Sir, I say that this budget could have been used in a much more useful way than the way in which it is being used now. (Applause from the Opposition benches.)

Khan Bahadur Haji BADI AHMED CHAUDHURY: আমি সর্ব্বপ্রথমে মাননীয় গোস্বামী মহাশয়কে ধন্যবাদ জ্ঞাপন করছি। তিনি বিশেষ ধৈর্য্য-সহকারে এই বাজেট প্রস্তুত করেছেন। এই দুর্দ্দিনে অন্নহীন বস্ত্রহীন গরীবদের জন্য বিশেষ উদারতার পরিচয় দিয়েছেন। লোক মরে যাবার সময় ঔষধ খাওয়ানো হয়েছে। আমাদের ইউনিয়নে এই ফাল্গুন মাসে এক শত কম্বল পাঠান হয়েছে। ফাল্গুন মাসে কম্বলের কি দরকার? যখন লক্ষ লক্ষ লোক মরে গেল তখন টাকা ও চাউলের ভাণ্ডার খোলা হল। (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANNYAL: ফসলের বীজ কবে গেল?) বীজ গেল যখন ধান কাটা প্রায় শেষ হল; কার্ত্তিক মাস যখন প্রায় শেষ হয়ে গেল। দেশে যে ছয়টা ঋতু আছে তার খবর জানবার জন্য গভর্ণ-[illegible]

খাদ্যশস্য ফলাও আন্দোলন করছেন কিন্তু কোথায় কত ধান-জমি পতিত অবস্থায় আছে ও গভর্ণমেণ্ট উপলব্ধি করছেন না কেন। খান বাহাদুর জালালউদ্দিন সাহেব এখানে আছেন তিনি জানেন তাঁহার নিজের থানায় কত জমি পড়িয়া আছে। তাতে কত ধান হতে পা অনুমান করুন। ১৮৯৭ সালের ঝড়ে বাংলার বিশেষ করে চট্টগ্রামের বহু লোক মারা যায় এ তার ফলে বহু জমি পতিত হয়। (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANNYAL; সেখানে ধান হলে— অনর্থক আমার সময় নষ্ট করবেন না। সেই জমি জঙ্গলে পরিপূর্ণ নয় তথাপি তাহা Fores Reserve করা হয়েছে। সেই জমি ধান চাষের জন্য ছেড়ে দিলে কত ধান হতে পারে অনুমা করুন। কিন্তু গভর্ণমেণ্ট সেই জমিগুলি ছাড়তে প্রস্তুত নহেন। (Mr. RASIK LAL BISWAS চাষ করার লোক আছে?) অনেক লোক আছে। গভর্ণমেণ্ট এই সম্বন্ধে যে তদন্ত কমি করেছেন সেই তদন্ত কমিটীর প্রধান কর্ম্মচারীরা সেখানে গিয়ে দেখুন সেখানে জঙ্গলে ভাল কা আছে কি না। জমি কোথায় আছে দেখুন। এখানে বলছি যে কোন দলের লোকের হাতে এই জমিগুলি যদি দেন তবে আগামী বৈশাখ মাসে ধান্য উৎপাদন আরম্ভ হলে ভাদ্র মাসে বা লক্ষ মণ ধান পাওয়া যেতে পারে। আমি মন্ত্রী মহোদয়কে অনুরোধ করছি বাংলা দেশের যেখানে সম্ভব সেখানে জমি Forest Department থেকে ছাড়িয়ে নিয়ে শস্য উৎপাদনের ব্যবস্থা করুন আমি বাংলা গভর্ণমেণ্টকে এই বিষয়ে উপদেশ দিচ্ছি এবং সঙ্গে সঙ্গে চোখে আঙ্গুল দিয়ে দেখিয়ে দিচ্ছি। (Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: কর্ণে আঙ্গুল দিয়ে শুনিয়ে দিন)।

তারপর লবণ। মাননীয় সুরাবর্দ্দী সাহেব গিয়েছেন দিল্লীতে এই সম্বন্ধে আলোচনা করবার জন্য। সেখানে এখন Assembly চলছে, সেখানে খাওয়া-দাওয়া মেলামেশার সুযোগ তিনি পাবেন। অথচ লবণ রয়েছে বঙ্গোপসাগরের তীরে—বাংলা দেশের শেষ প্রান্ত পর্য্যন্ত। অন্য জেলা ছেড়ে দিয়ে যদি কেবল চট্টগ্রামের লোকদের লবণ প্রস্তুত করতে দেওয়া হয় তাহলে তারা সমস্ত বাংলাকে লবণ যোগাতে পারবে। গভর্ণমেণ্ট হয়ত ভাববেন তাতে নদীর জল শুকিয়ে যাবে—নদীর জল লোনা। তারপর শুনুন চট্টগ্রামের লোকের কাছে প্রায় লক্ষ মণ লবণ মজুত আছে, Excise Departmentএর ভয়ে সেগুলি বাহির হচ্ছে না। যখন Gandhi-Irwin Pact হয় তখন স্থির হয়েছিল যে ব্যক্তিগতভাবে প্রয়োজনের জন্য লোকে লবণ প্রস্তুত করতে পারবে। কিন্তু এখন যে দশা হয়েছে তখন গভর্ণমেণ্টের উচিত লবণ প্রস্তুতের উপর সমস্ত বিধি-নিষেধ উঠিয়ে দেওয়া। তাহলে যারা গরীব, কাজ পায় না, খেতে পায় না, তারাও ছেলে মেয়ে নিয়ে লবণ তৈয়ারী করে লক্ষ লক্ষ মণ লবণ দিতে পারবে। (Here the red-light was lit) আর ৫ মিনিট সময় দেন, Sir,—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: আর দু'মিনিট।

Khan Bahadur Haji BADI AHMED CHAUDHURY: তাহলে দেখবেন লবণের অভাব হবে না। যদি বিশ্বাস না করেন আমি আপনাদের কাছে ১ লক্ষ টাকা জমা দিচ্ছি। আমি Ispahani নই। আমি বাংলা দেশের সমস্ত লবণ supply করব। তাহলে দেশের বহু বেকারও কাজ পাবে। আমি এ বিষয়ে গভর্ণমেণ্টকে উপদেশ দিচ্ছি। বাংলা দেশকে ডুবিয়ে দেওয়া কি গভর্ণমেণ্টের কর্ত্তব্য? আমাদের দেশে আজ অনেক বড় বড় লোক পথের ভিখারী হয়েছে যেমন Jamal Brothers। বাংলা গভর্ণমেণ্টও আজ প্রায় দেউলিয়া হয়েছে। যে বাংলা গভর্ণমেণ্ট ১১ কোটি টাকা দিয়ে খরচ চালাত সেই বাংলা গভর্ণমেণ্টের ২২ কোটি টাকায়ও কুলায় না। আর একটা কথা বলবো ভারত গভর্ণমেণ্টের দরকারের জন্য, বৃটিশ গভর্ণমেণ্টের প্রয়োজনের জন্য, বাংলা দেশ হতে বহু কোটি টাকা আদায় করা হয়, Custom duty এবং Portএর আয় হতে কলিকাতা এবং চট্টগ্রামের বন্দর থেকে। আর সেই

বাংলা দেশের দুঃসময়ে ভারত গভর্ণমেণ্ট এবং British গভর্ণমেণ্ট সাহায্য করবেন না। Bombay Port ছাড়া বোধ হয় আমরা ভারত গভর্ণমেণ্টকে বেশী টাকা দিই। (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANNYAL: Bombayর চাইতে আমরা বেশী দিই।) এই অবস্থায় আমাদের কর্জের ভার লাঘব করে India Government এবং British Government আমাদের আরও বেশী সাহায্য করবেন না কেন?

Khan Bahadur Maulvi S. ABDUR RAUF: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in going to say a few words on the Budget estimates of the present unfortunate province of Bengal I must first of all congratulate the Hon'ble Finance Minister for his ability in presenting the Budget for the year 1944-45 in a manner befitting his courage and ability. It presents a landmark in the whole financial history of the province of Bengal. It not only exceeds all other previous Budgets in respect of its income but expenditure also. It is just suitable to the present problem facing Bengal today.

It is memorable in many of its different aspects which it has tried to solve in an admirable way. The task before the Ministry is very great and grave, but it has not failed in its duty. Though the horrors of famine have minimised to a certain extent, yet its after effect is not yet over. The Ministry has done whatever lies in its power to save the people from the jaws of famine. They are really to be congratulated for what they have done, and are doing for mitigating the ravages of famine. The system of gratuitous relief which they have arranged during the famine and after the famine has saved many from their untimely death and I admire their relief activities. Besides providing gratuitous relief for the poor, it has arranged special medical relief and housing of the destitutes and orphans. I request the Government to establish at least one orphanage in each district. In the Civil Defence Budget we find that a considerable amount has been allotted. But considering the problem before us and also considering the fact that the whole of Bengal is now under the danger of war the amount is quite insufficient and we should approach the Central Government for sufficient fund for this department.

When we think of the military camps and aerodromes throughout Bengal we should think not only of the safety of the big cities but also of the small cities and villages. Sufficient arrangement should be made to save these people.

When we come to the Department of Civil Supplies we cannot but congratulate the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy. He has devoted his whole energy and time to supply the people of Bengal with proper foodgrains at reasonable prices. But for him the matter would have been otherwise. The steps which have been taken by Government to control the prices is really praiseworthy. If the people work in co-operation with the Government and officials, then every one can enjoy the benefit and reap the fruits of the labour of the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy.

As regards the supply of foodgrains the Government of Bengal should always press the Central Government for its proper supply during war emergency.

In the Irrigation Department though we find that a big sum has been allotted, yet it is not sufficient to cope with the situation considering the vastness of the prob em. The Grow More Food Campaign cannot be solved

unless irrigation works are taken up in right earnest. In Howrah no irrigation work has been taken up for the last 20 years, though the people of Howrah have been requesting the Government to take up the Kendua project, Kana-Damodar project and other minor irrigation projects. Sir, I beg to draw the attention of the Government to this direction.

As regards the Road Development the Government has not paid its proper attention to the district of Howrah. The Government has taken the list of several roads but not a single road has been constructed up till now. I request the Government to pay a little heed to this direction.

In the matter of Agriculture the Government has done laudable work by distributing seeds and agricultural loans to cultivators. But these are not at all sufficient. The major population of Bengal is agriculturist and it is the duty of the Government to look to their interest by giving them loans, lands, seeds and by protecting their cattle by proper legislation.

As regards the Industries Department it may be frankly admitted that Government has done much and has been doing a great deal by opening up various sections of industries. As industry is the only thing by which a nation can prosper the Government should come forward to help the people in their effort to promote any industry. The Government should encourage the people with sufficient funds to improve cottage industries of Bengal.

I find that a large sum has been provided in the head Education. But considering the need and illiteracy of the people the amount is not at all sufficient. Large sums of money have been allotted for higher education but as regards primary education which ought to be free and compulsory the amount is very insufficient.

I request the Government to make a proper arrangement for primary education either by proper allotment or by Education cess.

One notable item in this head I find is the grant of five lakhs for the schedule caste education. This will surely open the eyes of the honourable members of the Opposition. The League Ministry is not a communal Ministry. It is a national Ministry.

In this connection I beg to draw the attention of the Ministry to a long-felt Muslim demand of Hefzul Koran classes in the senior and junior madrassas throughout Bengal and that a grant of Rs. 2 lakhs be provided in the Budget for this purpose. The object of this scheme is to create Hafizes whose number is becoming scarcer and scarcer day by day in Bengal. If this is not taken up by this Ministry they will be lacking in their duty towards the Muslims of Bengal.

Now in the end I congratulate the Ministry for their good work for the people of Bengal and hope they will continue to do the same and bring the Secondary Education Bill in this session for its consideration and passing.

Miss MIRA DATTA GUPTA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, looking back on the last dismal year we see what great calamity can be wrought by alien Government operating through an unsympathetic Ministry. Mr. Amery has recently stated that deaths due to the last famine in Bengal and its aftermath were of the order of a million. Non-official estimate put the mortality at a higher figure but even if it is one million it would appear by far to exceed the number of persons killed in this war over five years in the whole of the British Empire. Time and again we have stated that a

Government which does not enjoy the confidence of the people is a dangerous raft to lean on, particularly in the turbulent sea of war. But, even now the lesson has not been learnt and a Government which is sincerely disliked and distrusted by vast masses of the people remains obstinately on saddle. We are asked to place our confidence in this Government. But, Sir, confidence wells up from the heart and cannot be enforced by decrees.

Today the people of this province are living in fear of yet another famine. The price fixed for rationed rice in Calcutta is yet beyond the means of the majority of the citizens of Calcutta. And if this is so in February, when rice should normally be more abundant, what are our prospects for the months, from July to November? In England which is a much richer country than ours, the prices of staple foodstuffs have not gone up beyond 25 *per cent.* But the present prevailing price of rice in Calcutta is 300 *per cent.* more than normal.

It is clear that in times of war, control of prices of foodstuff cannot be effected merely by decrees and ordinances. It is largely done by direct subsidies to farmers, fishermen and all producers of food from Government funds, as has been successfully done in England and America. In fact, in England during one year alone approximately 85 crores of rupees were given as subsidy to farmers. In this way only decrees regarding price control can be made effective In this way only can the burden of hardship be evenly distributed among all sections of the people. Otherwise the whole unbearable burden falls heavily on the shoulders of the poor.

There is yet no sign that large direct subsidies are yet being paid to farmers in order to keep down prices as also to encourage them to Grow More Food. On the contrary vast sums of money have actually found their way from Government coffers into the pockets of rich and unscrupulous traders. This is the net result of the loss suffered by the Government in its food purchases and distribution business. But this Government is tied to vested interests and shows no sign of taking this vital and essential step of subsidising the food-growers.

The condition of the children of the province is even more pitiable. The All-India Women's Conference is running destitute children's home but milk is scarce. Price of milk is still uncontrolled and is increasing from day to day.

So far as we are aware, the Government has not yet made even an estimate of the milk requirements of the province which should be the basis for a planned drive for increased milk production.

If the Government is really serious about saving children and nursing-mothers, it should add two more clauses to the rules the Government so easily frames under the Defence of India Act but for totally different purposes. The first is a Rule prohibiting slaughter of cattle for the next two years, and the other prohibiting the use of milk for purposes such as manufacture of casein and sweetmeats.

In England 8 crores of rupees were spent in a year for providing free milk to children. In England milk has been rationed and practically reserved for children and nursing-mothers practically from the beginning of the war.

We look in vain in the Budget for any of these provisions. The prospect of being ruled by an unthinking, unsympathetic and benighted Ministry foisted on the province against the wishes of the people has become unbearable.

Maulvi ABDUL WAHED : মাননীয় সহ-সভাপতি সাহেব, ঢাকার উপ-খাজা (A voice : খাজা না গাঁজা ?) বর্ত্তমানে প্রধান-মন্ত্রী মাননীয় স্যার নাজিমুদ্দিনের তথাকথিত পাকিস্থানী বনাম ফাঁকিস্থানী মন্ত্রিসভার ভিতর থেকে পাকিস্থানী অর্থ-সচিব মাননীয় তুলসীচরণ গোস্বামী মহাশয় প্রায় সতর কোটি টাকা ঋণভারে ভারাক্রান্ত বাজেট আমাদের সামনে উপস্থিত করেছেন তার সম্বন্ধে সাধারণ আলোচনা করতে গিয়ে আমার প্রথমে মনে পড়ে—আজ যদি আমাদের এই ভারতবর্ষ স্বাধীন হ'ত, অথবা অন্য কোন স্বাধীন দেশে এই জাতীয় বাজেট উপস্থিত করা হতো, তাহলে মন্ত্রীমহোদয়ের অন্য অভিনন্দনের পরিবর্ত্তে ঝাড়ু পাওয়াই সম্ভব হতো ? (A member from the Coalition Benches : ঝাড়ু মানে ?) ঝাড়ু মানে ঝাঁটা।

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I hope members will use palatable language.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE : Sir, a broomstick is always a boomerang.

(Interruptions from the Coalition Benches.)

Maulvi ABDUL WAHED : সহ-সভাপতি সাহেব, আমাদের এদিক থেকে সত্য কথাগুলি বলতে গেলেই ওরা গোলমাল করতে থাকেন, এবং মন্ত্রীরাও পালিয়ে যান কেন ? সহ-সভাপতি সাহেব ! আমরা যখন এই পরিষদে প্রথম বাজেট আলোচনা করি তখন বাংলার আয় ছিল প্রায় তের কোটি টাকা, এখন তাহা বাড়াইয়া ত্রিশ কোটি করার পরও দেখা যায় সতর কোটি টাকা ঘাটতি ; বিক্রয় কর, আবকারী প্রভৃতি নানা খাতে লাখ লাখ টাকা আয় দেখিয়েও শেষ পর্য্যন্ত সতর কোটি টাকা যখন ঘাটতি, কাজেই বাংলা গভর্ণমেণ্ট দেউলিয়া হয়েছে। এইটেই হচ্ছে আসলে সত্য কথা। এখন আবার বিক্রয় করটাকে দ্বিগুণ করে আর কৃষি আয়কর নূতন কোরে অভাব-জর্জ্জরিত কৃষক কুলের উপর চাপিয়ে মন্ত্রী মহাশয় নূতন আয়ের ফিকিরে প্রবৃত্ত হয়েছেন। কিন্তু সেই আয়করের টাকা কিসের জন্য ব্যয় হবে, তার কোন পরিকল্পনা বাজেটে নাই। মন্ত্রিদল সমর্থনকারী আমার এক বন্ধু বলেছেন—লীগ মন্ত্রিসভা হচ্ছে জাতীয় মন্ত্রিসভা, এটা একটা সাম্প্রদায়িক সভা নয়। আমি বলি এটা জাতীয় মন্ত্রিসভাই বটে, কিন্তু কুজাতীয় মন্ত্রিসভা। (Laughter) নৈলে জাতিকে সর্ব্বস্বান্ত কোরে যেসব টাকা মন্ত্রিমণ্ডল আদায় কোরছেন সেই টাকার দ্বারা কি হবে—তার কোন বোঝাপড়া নাই কেন ? এই প্রসঙ্গে আমার একটা গল্প মনে পড়ছে—একটি সদাগর এক থলি টাকা নিয়ে চল্‌লো সওদাগরী করতে। সঙ্গে একটি "কামককণী" মেয়েকে নিয়ে জাহাজে উঠ্‌লো। সেই মেয়েটির হাতে ছিল একটা লোহা। সেই লোহা দ্বারা সে জাহাজের তলায় ছোট একটা ছিদ্র করলো। সেই ছিদ্র দিয়ে যখন জল উঠে তখন ঐ মেয়েটা টাকার থলে খুলে একটি করে টাকা দিয়ে সেটা বন্ধ করতে চেষ্টা করলো—কিন্তু বারবার চেষ্টাতেও ছিদ্র বন্ধ হলো না ; ফলে ছিদ্র আরো বড় হয়ে জাহাজ ডুবে গেল এবং টাকাও সব শেষ হয়ে গেল। সেই রকম আমাদের মন্ত্রীদের হাতেও যত বেশী টাকাই দেয়া হোক না কেন মন্ত্রীদের সমর্থনকারী যেসব বন্ধুরা আছে তারা কে কোন দিক দিয়া ছিদ্র করে দিয়ে মন্ত্রিত্বের জাহাজ ডুবিয়ে দেন—সেই চিন্তাতেই মন্ত্রীরা অস্থির। সেই সব ছিদ্র বন্ধ করতেই সব টাকা শেষ হয়ে যাবে। দেশের বা জাতির মঙ্গলের জন্য একটি পয়সাও ব্যয় হবে না। মাননীয় সহ-সভাপতি সাহেব আমি নিজে একজন বাংলার চাষী-প্রজা, এবং এখানে এসেছি চাষী-প্রজার প্রতিনিধি হয়ে। কিন্তু আজ বাংলার চাষী-প্রজা যদি চায় আম, পায় তবে আমলী,

যদি চায় কাঁঠাল তবে পায় কাঁটা। তারা চেয়েছে—বিনা বেতনে বিনা ট্যাক্সে বাধ্যতামূলক শিক্ষা দেয়া হোক, শিক্ষা তো বাধ্যতামূলক হলোই না, বরঞ্চ তাদের ঘাড়ে বাধ্যতামূলক শিক্ষাকর চাপান হয়েছে। তারা চেয়েছে—পাটের দর বৃদ্ধি হোক, সে দর বৃদ্ধি ত হলোই না, যাতে দরটা বেশী না বাড়ে সেইজন্য সর্ব্বোচ্চ দর ১৭৲ টাকা বেঁধে দেওয়া হয়েছে। তারা চেয়েছে জমিদারী প্রথা বা চিরস্থায়ী বন্দোবস্ত উঠে যাক, সেটা তো উঠলোই না বরং আরো দৃঢ় হয়েছে, চেয়েছে খাজনা কমুক, কমলো তো না-ই বরঞ্চ কৃষি আয়কর বলে একটা নূতন কর তাদের ঘাড়ে চাপান হচ্চে। তারা আগে দিত কেবল জমির খাজনা এখন ফসলেরও খাজনা দিতে হবে। এই জায়গায় আমার একটা গল্প মনে পড়ে—কোন এক জায়গায় একটি বৃদ্ধ ফকির ছিল, সে নানান জায়গায় ভিক্ষা করতো। বৃদ্ধাবস্থায় হাঁটতে তার কষ্ট হত সেই জন্য সে সর্ব্বদাই খোদার কাছে মনে মনে একটা ঘোড়া চাইত, চড়ে ভিক্ষা করার জন্য। কিছুদিন পরে সেই জায়গায় একজন পুলিস অফিসার এলেন তদন্তে। তিনি এলেন একটা বাচ্চাওয়ালা ঘুড়ীতে চড়ে। মাজরা তদন্তের পর পুলিস কর্ম্মচারীটি যখন থানার দিকে ফিরে যান, তখন সেই বৃদ্ধ ফকিরটি যেখানে ভিক্ষা করে বেড়াইতেছিল, বহু রাস্তা চলার দরুণ বাচ্চাটি দুর্ব্বল হয়ে ঐ ফকিরের নিকটে এসে শুয়ে পড়লো। কাজেই বাচ্চাটি নেওয়া পুলিস কর্ম্মচারীর পক্ষে মুসকিল হয়ে পড়লো। তখন পুলিস কর্ম্মচারী ফকিরকে বল্লেন—আমার এই বাচ্চাটাকে তোমার কাঁধে করে থানায় নিয়ে যেতে হবে। তখন ফকির পুলিসের চক্ষুরাঙ্গানীর ভয়ে ঐ বাচ্চা কাঁধে নিয়ে চলতে লাগল আর মনে মনে বলতে লাগল—খোদা যেমন ঘোড়া চেয়েছিলাম তেমনি ঘোড়াই দিয়েছ! চেয়েছিলাম আমি চড়বো ঘোড়ায়—আর এখন সেই ঘোড়াই চড়ছে আমার কাঁধে!! বাংলার চাষীর অবস্থাও ঠিক তাই। তারা খাজনা কমাবার জন্য, টেক্স কমাবার জন্য দাবী করেছিল, আরও তারা দাবী করেছিল—এই দুর্দ্দিনে চৌকিদার দফাদারদের বেতন গভর্ণমেণ্টের তহবিল থেকে চালিয়ে দিয়ে তাদের বিনামূল্যে ঔষধ দেয়া হোক, সে বিনামূল্যে ঔষধ তো দিচ্ছেনই না, বরং মূল্য দিয়েও আজ তারা ঔষধ পায় না। ফলে বর্ত্তমান মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলীর স্বার্থপরতামূলক অপকর্ম্মের জন্য বাংলার হিন্দু-মুসলমানের প্রায় ৫০ লক্ষ লোক শ্মশান আর কবরে চলে গেছে। অন্য কোন স্বাধীন দেশে যদি এই রকম ব্যবস্থা হতো—

(At this stage the Hon'ble Finance Minister left the chamber and it was found that the Treasury Benches were empty.)

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: On a point of privilege.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Finance Minister has taken leave of me. He will be coming just now. Let the debate continue.

(Cries of "No, no" and uproar from the Opposition Benches.)

(The Hon'ble Finance Minister at this stage was seen to enter the chamber.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Finance Minister took permission from me. He has come now.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: On a point of privilege. When a general discussion of the budget takes place is it not infringing the privileges of the House for the Treasury Benches to absolutely empty themselves? I want your ruling, Sir, specifically on that point.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Banerjee, it is not a question of privilege at all. It is desirable that Treasury Benches should be represented, but there are personal difficulties of individuals. The Hon'ble Finance Minister came to me and took leave of me for one or two minutes.

Maulvi ABDUL WAHED: এই রকমভাবে যদি অত্যাচার হতো—যদি মন্ত্রীদের স্বার্থপরতামূলক অপকর্মের ফলে লক্ষ লক্ষ লোক মরতো তাহলে মন্ত্রীদের টেনে নিয়ে খুনি আসামীর কাঠগড়ায় চড়িয়ে ফাঁসি কাষ্ঠে ঝুলাইত অথবা যাবজ্জীবনের জন্য দ্বীপান্তর বাসে পাঠাইত। (A member from the Coalition Benches : সঙ্গে সঙ্গে আপনাকেও জুড়ে দিতো।) কিন্তু দুর্ভাগ্য আমাদের যে, আমাদের দেশ পরাধীন, দেশবাসী কেবল অন্যায় সহ্য করেই যাবে, অপরাধীর বিচারের যথাযোগ্য অধিকার যাদের নাই। মন্ত্রিদল সমর্থনকারী আমার এক বন্ধু বলেছেন যে সঙ্গে সঙ্গে আমাকেও জুড়ে দিত। তার উত্তরে আমি বলছি আপনাদের শাসন-নীতি তাই, অপরাধ করবে একজন, আর শাস্তি পাবে অপরে। বাংলার লক্ষ লক্ষ লোক খুন করেছেন আপনারা আর ফাঁসি হবে আমার। মাননীয় সহ-সভাপতি সাহেব, এই যে অসংখ্য টাকা,—লক্ষ লক্ষ কোটি কোটি টাকা বাংলার জনসাধারণ এই মন্ত্রীদের হাতে তুলে দিয়েছে সেই টাকা দিয়ে যে তারা ছিনিমিনি খেলছেন এটা জনসাধারণ আর সহ্য করবে না। এর একটা জবাবদিহি তাঁদের করতেই হবে। পাকিস্থানের ফাঁকি দিয়ে আর চলবে না। (A member : পাকিস্থান হয়েই গেছে।) পাকিস্থান ফেঁসে গেছে—বড়লাট সাহেবের বিবৃতি পড়ে দেখুন। নোয়াখালীতে গিয়ে দেখুন তার প্রতিক্রিয়াও আরম্ভ হয়েছে। তাই আমি মন্ত্রী মহোদয়কে সাবধান করছি—এই রকমভাবে মেজরিটির জোরে এ হাউসে বসে লেকচার দিলে আর চলবে না। তাঁরা যে কেবল লোককে কলার ধোকা দিয়ে পালিয়ে থাকতে চান এ রকম পালিয়ে থাকা আর চলবে না। জনসাধারণের সামনে যেতে হবে। আবার গদি উল্টাতে কতক্ষণ। (Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK : আপনাদের সামনে ঘুরবে নাকি?) তাই বলছি এখনো সাবধান হোন।

মাননীয় সহ-সভাপতি সাহেব বিগত মন্ত্রিসভা—হক মন্ত্রিসভা যখন গঠিত হয়েছিল তাতে যখন ডা: শ্যামাপ্রসাদের মতন বিশিষ্ট ব্যক্তি যোগ দিয়েছিলেন তখন বর্তমান প্রধান-মন্ত্রী তথা-কথিত লীগ নেতা উচ্চৈস্বরে চিৎকার করেছিলেন—বাংলার মুসলমানের সর্বনাশ করা হয়েছে, হিন্দু মন্ত্রিত্ব কায়েম করা হয়েছে। আজকে জিজ্ঞাসা করতে চাই স্যার নাজিম ও তাঁর সমর্থক লীগওয়ালাদিগকে শ্যামাপ্রসাদে প্রসাদ আর বিজয়প্রসাদেও প্রসাদ, এক শ্যামাপ্রসাদের নামে তারা গণলেন মহা ফেসাদ আর বিজয়প্রসাদকে গ্রহণ করলেন মহাপ্রসাদ, কি গুণে গ্রহণ করেছেন? প্রমথনাথের নামে হল তাঁদের হৃদকম্পন কিন্তু তারকনাথের তারকেশ্বরে দিলেন আত্মবিসর্জন। কি কারণে? না—জাতে জাতে ধাতে ধাতে মিলেছে যেহেতু জাতে সবাই জমিদার এবং ধাত হয়েছে গোলামীর ধাত। (Laughter from all sides.) এই যে খাম-খেয়ালী এটায় আর লোক ভুলবে না। তাই সাবধান করছি—বর্তমান মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলকে তারা যেন সতর্ক হয়ে চলেন। এবার জনসাধারণের নিকট যাবার বেলায় পিঠে গদি বেঁধে যেতে হবে।

Mr. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED KHONDKAR: Sir, first of all I must congratulate the Hon'ble the Finance Minister for the beautiful language in which he has shrouded the defects of his bad budget and the bankruptcy of the Bengal Government. I shall congratulate him over again for the increased revenue under "Excise", and I shall congratulate my Muslim League friends on the other side of the House for their achievement in increasing revenues from intoxicating liquor and drugs. As true Muslims they perhaps feel proud of this achievement! There was a cry for prohibition and the result is that we have got an increased revenue under the head "Excise". "Toil on and preserve yourselves for happier circumstances" is the last line in the budget statement of the Hon'ble the Finance Minister. Sufferings of the people will be there, difficulties of the people

will also be there, and this is the sermon addressed to the suffering people by the Hon'ble Minister "Go on suffering, go on enduring till you attain to that happier circumstance whether it comes here in this world or in the next world."

Sir, the Finance Minister in his budget statement has shown the apathy of the Central Government for suitable contribution to this province at a time when this province is really in want. Instruction to the Hon'ble Finance Minister received from the Central Government is to work out the salvation within the limits of the financial settlement and allocation of revenues between the Centre and the provinces and he has been asked to find out the resources from within the bounds of the province of Bengal. Instead of making any protest, instead of showing any resentment he tamely obeyed the instruction and believing in the motto "Heaven helps those who help themselves" has brought before this House two pieces of taxation measures which will be very shortly passed into law. He knows very well that in previous years visitation of nature in the shape of flood, failure of crop, and cyclone devastated this unfortunate province and last year this province was in the grip of a terrible famine and this Ministry was mostly responsible for its severity. Knowing it fully well he came before the House with these two taxation measures. He has advocated that taxation is a necessary evil and the tax-payers or the rate-payers of the country should curtail a little of their personal comfort and sacrifice it for their neighbours and the people all around, for bringing in better conditions with improved sanitation, increased security, enlightenment and prosperity. These taxation measures, when passed into law and when given effect to, will deal the last blow on the camel's back and will extract the last drop of blood from the rate-payer from the nearest quarter of his heart. Sir, nothing has been said as to why these taxation measures were introduced and what for has not been mentioned in the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bills and we have not seen in the Budget any hint about it. The suppressed hint that the Hon'ble Minister has given is that the revenue will be utilised for nation-building purposes and for the amelioration of the condition of the suffering people. We have gone into the allotments made under different heads under different grants of the Budget. Those grants are not satisfactory, they will never build the nation, they will never ameliorate the condition of the suffering people of the province, nor will those grants rehabilitate the condition of the people after this famine.

Sir, there was a demand from a long time for the rehabilitation of the co-operative movements in Bengal and that is a demand most essential at a time when Bengal was passing through such a crisis, but it is curious that no attempt has been made by the Hon'ble the Finance Minister to provide funds or make allotments for the rehabilitation of the co-operative movements in Bengal. He speaks of better enlightenment and by enlightenment he means education in the initial stage in the form of primary education. The allotment or the grant made for free primary institutions is too insufficient. I would tell this House and draw the attention of the Hon'ble Finance Minister to the fact that the School Boards established under the Bengal Rural Primary Act of 1930 are going to be closed very shortly. In my district there is a heavy arrear of cess and there is no

chance of its realisation and poor teachers have not been paid for months together and there is no knowing when they will be paid. These poor teachers without regular payment of their poor pay cannot impart education to the children who would be men in future. There is very little grant left for "educational institutions" under the head "Education". Sir, this Government is a one-party Government so to say, and there are many abuses of various kinds committed by the present Government. I shall refer to some of the abuses that resulted from the occasional and off and on intereference of the Government in the administration of this province. Officers are often transferred all on a sudden without any fault of their own. Mr. M. C. Mukharji, Subdivisional Officer of Faridpur, was transferred there by the first part of 1943 and he had to go away from that station by the latter part of the same year. His fault was that he did not concede to the request of the Secretary of the District Muslim League in connection with a criminal case in which his sister's husband was involved. And, Sir, in the case of Mr. K. P. Sen, Subdivisional Officer, Gopalganj, three transfer orders were passed within a period of three months. Two orders were cancelled at the intervention of the District Magistrate for his excellent relief work. It is curious to note that within 3 days of the cancellation of the second order, the third order was issued.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your time is up.

Mr. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED KHONDKAR: A minute more, Sir. Within 3 days of the cancellation of the second order which was communicated from the Writers' Buildings by wire we were surprised to see that the gentleman was again transferred. The fault was due to the fact that he himself transferred another sister's husband of the Secretary of the District Muslim League who was a clerk in the local Supply Office.

Sir, another officer by name Mr. N. G. Mukherjee a professor of the Bengal Veterinary College——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I hope you will not refer to Subdivisional Officers and other officers in your speech by name.

Mr. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED KHONDKAR: I can cite several instances——

Maulvi AHMED ALI MRIDHA: Many things can be said against these officers also.

(Interruption.)

Maulvi SHAMSUDDIN AHMED KHONDKAR: Sir, this officer has been removed without assigning any reasons or showing any cause for his removal. No proceedings were drawn up against him. He was simply removed. Why? Because he could not be in the good book of the Assistant Secretary of the Agriculture Department who happens to be a nephew or nephew-in-law of the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Agriculture Department. This was the man who was arrested in a hotel in Calcutta for taking bribes.

Another Assistant Registrar of Faridpur who had only two months to retire was transferred from that station to Chittagong knowing fully well that after two months he would retire from service. The reason was that

the general election of the Central Co-operative Bank and the re-constitution of its managing committee were near at hand and he was requested to take sides with the Muslim Leaguers, but he did not like to identify himself with any party. That was his offence.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your time is up.

Mr. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED KHONDKAR: Just one sentence, Sir. There are many instances to which I would like to refer, but I shall cite them at the time of cut motions.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have allotted not more than 10 minutes for each speaker and I hope Mr. Anandilal Poddar will try to finish his speech in even less time.

Mr. ANANDILAL PODDAR: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Budget estimates for 1944-45 presented against a background of gloom and despair, made a dismal reading. Nevertheless, the financial statement of the year 1944-45 breathes a candour and humility, characteristic of the Hon'ble the Finance Minister. I admire him for his candour and clarity of expression. I admire him all the more for his ability to present facts as they are.

It is good for us to be here. Let us attempt a close study of the budget provisions of 1944-45. The statement begins with a reference to three important heads:—

"63—Extraordinary charges in India;

54—Famine;

40—Agriculture."

The expenditure on civil defence under Extraordinary charges debitable to provincial revenues will be one crore and one crore 30 lakhs, respectively, for the years 1943-44 and 1944-45 and the cost of Civil Supplies Department under this very head, which in 1942-43 was only 4 lakhs mounts up to 1 crore and 1 crore 48 lakhs for the years 1943-44 and 1944-45, respectively. These figures, the Finance Minister states, do not include the losses on the department's trading operations, which have been placed at 3½ crores and 5 crores, respectively. The total provisions on account of famine relief in the years 1943-44 and 1944-45 are 8½ crores—5 crores 65 lakhs for the current year and 2 crores 65 lakhs for 1944-45. Under the head "40—Agriculture" for Grow More Food Campaign alone, 1 crore 35 lakhs has been provided in the current year and 50 lakhs for 1944-45. These provisions which nearly take away half the revenue of the province and equal the total expenditure of the province during 1940-41, are likely to create an impression on the public mind that all the activities of the Government are directed towards the promotion of people's welfare and that the crushing burden of indebtedness which is being imposed upon the province is only to meet the ever-growing demand of an extraordinarily difficult situation created by conditions over which this Government had no control. We, on this side, Sir, are quite prepared to vote for any provisions made in the interests of the people. But we must be convinced, first of all, that the position that has been created is not due to the mishandling of the entire situation by this Government during the last 12 months, nor due to deliberate mismanagement and mal-administration of the affairs of the province which

landed the province into disaster and created famine conditions that resulted in deaths of millions in Bengal. By this Government's pursuit of wrong policies and programmes, it has bungled from stage to stage, by its insistence immediately after assumption of office on the sufficiency of foodstuffs in the face of categorical statements by leading officials and non-officials to the contrary; by its maladjustment and maldistribution of foodstuffs, it has created a chaos unparalleled in the history of any civilised country within a century.

I am afraid, I am looking backward. In the language of the Finance Minister himself, we must look backward and forward, just to assess at its true value, the real situation. A Government, which competes with the Government of India in the matter of reckless profiteering, in certain wheat transactions, should not come forward to impose additional burdens upon this province. Lest I may be misunderstood, Sir I once again try to refresh the memory of the members of the Legislature by referring to a statement that "from May to August, the profit to the Bengal Government alone amounted to Rs. 33/34 lakhs, derived solely, from sales of wheat to Mills". "In addition to wheat sales, the Bengal Government earned a gross revenue of 6·52 lakhs from re-sale of wheat products".

I am referring only to a few salient points, just to remind the members of the House what shady transactions this Government had carried on behind the scene, which have ultimately affected the entire province. Sir, it is neither the time nor the occasion to discuss the entire position threadbare, but the fact remains that this Government has been responsible for a desperate situation in this province, and this Government again comes forward with definite proposals for fresh taxation, fresh burdens to be imposed upon the province to meet the deficit to which they have themselves greatly contributed.

Sir, I will presently refer to the provisions made under the head "Famine". Sir, it appears from the budget that on account of salaries and establishment, a sum of Rs. 1 crore and 11 lakhs has been provided for the year 1944-45, and 90 lakhs for the current year, as shown in the revised estimate. This is really illuminating. Thousands of appointments that have already been made and thousands that are going to be made in the course of the next few months, are not justified by the financial crisis with which we are faced at the present moment. It would have been much better if this money were utilised in the shape of gratuitous relief or loans to the poor harassed province of Bengal. It is further pointed out that instead of 4 lakhs, spent in 1942-43 for the Civil Supplies Department we require one crore and one crore and 48 lakhs for 1943-44 and 1944-45, respectively. Sir, we have discussed the question of the organisation of the Civil Supplies Department in the past, how public money, instead of being properly utilised, has been directed in wrong channels, how instead of utilising the trades having sufficient experience, integrity and efficiency, Government ration shops were opened. What gross abuse, corruption, what nepotism has marked the administration of this department! How in disregard of the Government of India's decision, the Government of Bengal have reduced the percentage of private dealers from 55 to 22 *per cent.* only and placed those stores under the charge and control of inefficient and

inexperienced hands. Naturally, therefore, it has created further suspicion in the public mind.

Let us now refer to the capital head, 85A, opened for large scale trading operations, undertaken by Government for (1) purchase of foodgrains other than wheat, (2) purchase of wheat and wheat products, (3) supply of foodstuffs to Government employees including Civic Guards and A.R.P. personnel, (4) purchase of standard cloth, and sugar and salt.

The total capital involved in this scheme for the current year is 76 crores of which 41 crores are to be derived from sale proceeds. The loss, as the Finance Minister points out, due to the sale of foodstuffs to the public at less than cost price, has been placed at 3½ crores of rupees and the book value of the stock that is likely to remain in hand towards the end of the year is estimated at 29¾ crores. The total outlay for the year 1944-45 is 81 crores and loss, 5 crores, and a carry forward of 12 crores of foodgrains other than wheat and some 56 lakhs of salt. The Hon'ble the Finance Minister has given us no details as to the transactions regarding purchase of foodgrains and resale of the same at less than cost price. No accounts are furnished as to the profit and loss accruing out of these transactions. Besides, the book value of the stock estimated at 29¾ crores represents only the book value, not certainly the market value, and who knows what will be the loss on this account and what will be the further accumulation of the debit side. It is rather a misfortune for the province as also for the legislature that we have to support proposals for provisions in the budget without knowing the details. Even a zamindar cannot continue for any length of time in this state of things. He has to be declared disqualified some day or other, and some court of wards must come to take charge of the estate so mismanaged. Under section 81 we cannot be called upon to vote for any demands unless the details are presented before the House by the Finance Minister in proper form. How can the Finance Minister come forward today with proposals for the coming year of a total outlay of 81 crores and carry-forward of 12 crores of foodgrains without a detailed scheme as to how the money is to be invested in foodgrains other than wheat, how much in wheat and wheat products and what are the likely losses and profits to accrue out of these transactions, what will be the depreciation in the value of 12 crores of foodgrains carried forward. These things which the legislature must be satisfied about before the Finance Minister can ask the Legislature to support any demand or any provision in the budget on this account. I do not understand the meaning of deliberate depreciation. The Hon'ble the Finance Minister has himself hinted in page 2 of his statement that the estimated loss of 5 crores on these transactions does not cover the further loss "with which we shall undoubtedly be faced one day—shortages, damaged stocks and unsaleable stocks, etc." But may I respectfully point out that this loss could be avoided if the Government only utilised suitable agencies for shortage and distribution as in Bombay and would not have neglected the basic principles of economics.

(At this stage the member having reached the time-limit, resumed his seat.)

Mr. A. M. A. ZAMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. আজকের এই বাজেট (A member from the Coalition Benches: এই তো এখন যা তা বলতে উঠলো।) প্রথমেই ওঁরা বলছেন আমি যা তা বলবো। আমি ওঁদের শুনিয়ে দিচ্ছি—আমি যা তা বলবো না। আমি বলবো—কতকগুলি সত্য কথা। এই যে বাজেট আরম্ভ হয়েছে এটা কিসের বাজেট? আমার মতে এটাকে আজরাইলের বাজেট—যমদূতের বাজেট বল্লেই ঠিক হয়। গত বছর যেভাবে গিয়েছে—যেভাবে যমদূত এসে বাংলা দেশে বসেছে, তাকে বাঁচিয়ে রাখবার জন্যই বর্ত্তমান বাজেটটা হয়েছে। আমরা যখন রাস্তায় বেরিয়েছি তখন দেখেছি নানান গাছতলায়, আমতলায়, বটতলায়, নিমতলায় চালের বস্তা সব পচে যাচ্ছে। বর্ষাকালে যখন চাল নাই বলে চিৎকার করেছে, তখন দেশের লোককে বাঁচাবার জন্য সেসব চাল বার করে নাই। বর্ত্তমানে যেসব পচা চাল দেশের লোককে রেশনের জন্য দিচ্ছে সেগুলি যদি তখন ছেড়ে দিত তাহলে বাংলার দুর্ভিক্ষ কখনো এমন ভীষণ আকারের হতো না। বাংলার বর্ত্তমান মন্ত্রিদল যমদূতের agent হিসাবে এই দুঃখকে ও দুর্ভিক্ষকে ডেকে এনেছে। তারা চেয়েছিল যে আমরা যদি বেঁচে থাকি তাহলেই ঠিক হবে—দেশের লোক মরে তো মরুক। বর্ত্তমানে যা দেখছি তাতেও অবস্থার কিছু উন্নতি হয় নাই। আমাদের নারায়ণগঞ্জ subdivisionএ যতগুলি ইউনিয়ন আছে তার প্রত্যেকটিতে গড়-পড়তায় ১৮ থেকে ১৯ হাজার লোকের বাস। আমি যে ইউনিয়নে বাস করি সেখানকার কথাই বলি। সেখানে কেরোসিন দিয়েছেন ৭৫ টিন মাসে। সেখানে লোক হলো ১৬ হাজার। লবণ সেখানে দিয়েছেন ৬০ মণ। চিনি দিয়েছেন ১২ মণ। বাজরা ৭৫ মণ, গম দিয়েছেন ৩৬ মণ, কিন্তু চাল সেখানে যায় নাই। বর্ত্তমানে সেখানে চালের দর ১৯।।০ টাকা থেকে ২১।।০ টাকা পর্য্যন্ত। এই রকম অবস্থা সারাটা "সাবডিভিশনে"। ১৮ হাজার থেকে ২০ হাজার লোক যে ইউনিয়নে, সেখানে মাসে ৭৫ টিন কেরোসিন, আর ৬০ মণ লবণের দ্বারা কি কোরে চলতে পারে? মন্ত্রী যাঁরা তাঁদের সঙ্গে খানা খেয়ে দেখেছি—টেবিলের উপর যেসব ছোট ছোট নিমকদান থাকে তা থেকে তারা একটুকু কোরে নুন নিয়ে খান, কাজেকাজেই নিমক লোকের ঐ পরিমাণেই লাগে এইটে তাঁরা অনুমান করেছেন। কিন্তু তরিতরকারী পাক করতে যে লবণ লাগে এ কথাটা বোধ হয় ভুলে গেছেন। কাজেই আমি তাঁদের কাছে জিজ্ঞাসা করতে চাই বাজেটে যেসব বিষয় পাশ করাতে চান তার নমুনাও কি এই রকমের হবে! আমাদের বর্ত্তমান Finance Ministerএর সাহস আছে। তিনি এক সময় কংগ্রেসে ছিলেন, কংগ্রেসে থেকে যে সাহস উপার্জ্জন করেছেন সেই সাহসের অপব্যবহার করবার জন্যই এটা দেখিয়েছেন। যদি অন্য দলে থাকতেন তাহলে ওঁর এরকম সাহস হতো না। যে সব খাদ্য দিয়েছেন তা খেয়ে লোকের বেরিবেরি হোচ্ছে। যে আটা দিয়েছেন তাতে গ্রামের লোকে কি করে রুটি তৈরী করবে? গরীবের ঘরে রুটি তৈরী করার জিনিষ নাই। তাদের এটা দেখা দরকার যে ঐ আটা দ্বারা রুটি তৈরী করা যায় কি না (Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: আমাদের নিমন্ত্রণ করুণ না কেন।) আমাদের গরীবদের নিমন্ত্রণ কি গ্রহণ করবেন! যদি গ্রহণ করেন তাহলে কাল দুপুর বেলায় সমস্ত ministerদের আর আপনাদের দাওয়াৎ করছি। (A member: আমরা যে ১২০ জন) আপনারা সকলেই অনুগ্রহ করে যাবেন। (Laughter.) আমার কথা হল এই যে ওঁরা যা দেন তা দেশসেবার দিক দিয়ে দেন না। ওঁদের মনে তো কোন ভয় বা লজ্জা নাই। কারণ ওঁরা মনে করেন—আমরা যেভাবে ইচ্ছা চলি আমাদের গদি ত থাকবেই। মুসলীম লীগের নামে যে একদল আছে তাঁরা propaganda করছেন যে সমস্ত ঠিক হয়ে গেছে—লোকের আর চিন্তার কারণ নাই। এদিকে আমরা যারা দেশের দুর্দ্দশার কথা নিয়ে চিৎকার করি তাদের কথা খবরের কাগজে বেরোয় না, কারণ আমরা যে বিরুদ্ধবাদী। আমাদের সামনে যেসব রেশনের দোকান তার কারসাজি গত সপ্তাহে ধরা পড়েছে,

আমি যখন আমার চাকরকে চাল আনতে পাঠিয়েছিলাম তখন তাকে দিয়েছে আতপ চাল। একটু পরেই মুসলীম লীগ সভা যখন গেলেন তখন তাকে দেওয়া হলো ভাল সিদ্ধ চাউল। (Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: আতপ চালও তো ভাল হতে পারে?) বাবু অতুল কুমারকে আমি এখনই নিয়ে যেতে পারি সেই সমস্ত চালের নমুনা দেখাতে। যার যার বাড়ীতে গিয়ে তল্লাস করলেই দেখা যাবে কার ঘরে "কোন ক্ষেতের" চাল আছে। যদি অতুল কুমারের বাড়ী যাই তাহলে যে রকম চালের নমুনা দেখবো—সে অতি সরু চাল, আর আমাদের ঘরে কি ধরণের চাল বেরুবে তা তারা এসে দেখে যাক। এ আমার নিজের দেখা—আমি প্রমাণ দিতে প্রস্তুত। ওরা মনে করছে আমরা ত পাচ্ছি, কিন্তু আমি বলি কি ওরা পেলেই তো আর দেশের লোকে পায় না। ৩ লক্ষ টন তো excess রয়েছিল। কিন্তু বটগাছ আর নিমগাছের তলায় পচিয়ে ফেলে লাভ কি হবে? আমাদের ঘরে যদি চাল থাকতো—তাহলে আর আমাদের ছেলেপিলে না খেয়ে মরতো না। ওঁরা কি কখনো বাংলার গ্রামে বাজড়া দেখেছেন? সেখানে বাজড়া জিনিষটা যে কি তা আজ পর্য্যন্ত গ্রামের লোক বুঝতে পারছে না। ওঁরা আটা দিয়েছেন, কি করে ঝুটি তৈরী করে অনেকেই জানে না। কাজেই এবছরও লোক আবার শাক পাতা খেতে আরম্ভ করেছে। যে আলুর দাম গত বছরে বেশী ওঠে নাই, বর্ত্তমানে সেই আলুর মণ ৭।৮৲ টাকা পর্য্যন্ত উঠেছে। মন্ত্রী মহাশয় যে বলেছেন যে সব ঠিক আছে—ঠিক তো আছেই, ওদের ঘরে বাইরে ঠিক আছে! আর কারো নাই। ওঁরা Civil Supply Departmentএ যা করেছেন, সেখানে ওঁদের নিজেদের লোকদের, আত্মীয়-স্বজনদের চাকরী দিয়ে মুখ বন্ধ করেছেন। কিন্তু আত্মীয়স্বজন ছাড়া যেসব লোক এদেশে আছে তাদের ক্ষুধা বন্ধ করবেন কি না আজরাইল যেমন চায় যে যত মরে ততই ভাল, সেই রকম ministers যাঁরা বর্ত্তমান মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলে আছেন তারা চান বাংলা দেশের লোক মরে ছারখার হোক, আমাদের আর আমাদের জামাই ও শালাদের চাকরী থাক, আমরা বেঁচে থাকি। কিন্তু আমি বলে দিচ্ছি এভাবে চলবে না গত বছরে চালের দাম এই দিনে ছিল ৭৲ টাকা থেকে ৮৲ টাকা। আর এখন

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your time is up.

Mr. A. M. A. ZAMAN: আর এক second, Sir; সেই চাল যে চাল গত বছরে বিক্রয় হয়েছে ৭।৮৲ টাকা তার দাম এখন ২০৲ টাকা পর্য্যন্ত উঠেছে। আমাদের কাছ থেকে ওঁরা যে সময় ministry নিয়েছিলেন সে সময়—

(The member having reached the time limit resumed his seat.)

Mr. PATIRAM ROY: মাননীয় অর্থ-সচিব মহোদয় যে Budget speech দিয়েছেন তার লিপিকুশলতা বাদ দিলে নূতনত্ব কিছুই নাই। এই বাজেটে ১০ কোটি টাকার উপর ঘাটতি দেখান হয়েছে। তবে আমি বলতে বাধ্য যে Schedule caste educationএর জন্য যে ৫ লক্ষ টাকা রেখেছেন তাতে তিনি Schedule casteএর কৃতজ্ঞতা অর্জন করেছেন। পুলিশের খাতে দেখা যায় ১৯৪০-৪১ সালে ব্যয় হয়েছিল ২ কোটি ৪০ লক্ষ ৫ হাজার টাকা, বর্ত্তমান বাজেটে সেই ব্যয় ধরা হয়েছে ৩ কোটি ২ লক্ষ টাকার উপর। পুলিশের ব্যয় দিন দিন বেড়েই চলেছে অথচ পুলিশের কৃপায় পল্লীবাসীর প্রাণ অতিষ্ঠ হয়ে উঠেছে। শুধু খুলনায় নয় যখন দক্ষিণ বঙ্গে Denial Policy হয় তখন দেখা গিয়েছিল কতকগুলি নৌকার মাঝিরা স্থলে পুলিশ থাকা সত্ত্বেও অবাধে পুলিশকে বৃদ্ধাঙ্গুষ্ঠ দেখিয়ে চলে গেছে—অথচ ঐসব অঞ্চলে পুলিসের অনুমতি ছাড়া নৌকা চলতে পারতো না। তারপর যখন ধান-চাউল seize করা হয়েছিল তখন অনেক সময় সেগুলি গৃহস্থের বাড়ী হতে থানায় নিয়ে যাবার জন্য পুলিশ পাওয়া

যায় নাই। সেগুলি নষ্ট হয়েছে অথচ লোকে খেতে পায় নি। নদীর জলে অর্দ্ধেক পড়ে গেছে তারপর আজকাল দেখা যাচ্ছে খুলনা, বরিশাল অঞ্চলে নৌকাযোগে যাতায়াত করা প্রায় অসম্ভব হয়ে পড়েছে, কেন না, ডাকাতেরা লোকজন মেরে টাকাকড়ি কেড়ে নিয়ে যাচ্ছে। যদি লোকজন বাড়ী থেকে অন্য জায়গায় যেতে না পারে তাহলে এত টাকা ব্যয় করে পুলিশ রাখবার কি প্রয়োজনীয়তা আছে। এইরূপ ঘটনা প্রায় প্রতিদিনই থানায় ডায়েরী করা হয় অথচ আজ পর্য্যন্ত কোন প্রতিকার হয় নাই।

তারপর বর্ত্তমান বাজেটে মন্ত্রী মহোদয় agriculture, famine and extraordinary chargesএর দরুণ অত্যধিক টাকা ব্যয় ধরেছেন।

Grow More Food Campaignএর জন্যও খুব বেশী টাকা খরচ হয়েছে। ১৯৪১-৪২ সালে এই বাবদ খরচ হয়েছিল ৭৯ লক্ষ ১০ হাজার টাকা আর ১৯৪৩-৪৪ সালে এতে খরচ হয়েছিল ১ কোটি ৩ লক্ষ ৯৯ হাজার টাকা। আগামী ১৯৪৪-৪৫ সালের বাজেটে ধরা হয়েছে ১ কোটি ৩০ লক্ষ টাকা। এই Grow More Food Campaignএর খরচ বেড়েই চলেছে। অথচ বাস্তব ক্ষেত্রে দেখা যাচ্ছে বাংলা দেশে বহু পরিমাণ জমি পতিত রয়েছে, যেখানে জঙ্গল ছিল সেখানে জঙ্গল রয়েছে। তবে এই টাকাটা ব্যয় হল কোথায়। এই টাকা দিয়ে কতকগুলি officer পোষা হয়েছে, কতকগুলি কাগজ ছাপিয়ে চারিদিকে ছড়িয়ে দেওয়া হয়েছে অর্থাৎ এই টাকাটা জলে ফেলা হয়েছে। তারপর গভর্ণমেণ্ট থেকে বলা হয় এই টাকা দিয়ে ভাল বীজ বোনা হয়েছে যাতে করে অল্প জমিতে বেশী পরিমাণ ফসল উৎপন্ন হয়। এইবার অনেক ক্ষেত্রে দেখা গিয়েছে যখন এই বীজ দেওয়া হয়েছে তখন বীজের আবশ্যকতা মিটে গেছে। তার ফলে হয়েছে সেই বীজ ব্যয়িত হয়েছে খাওয়ার জন্য। তারপর অনেক সময় দেখা গেছে হাজার হাজার টাকার আলুর বীজ নষ্ট হয়ে গেছে। Permission নিয়ে যখন বীজ আনতে যাওয়া গেল তখন দেখা গেল গুদামে একটিও বীজ নাই—সমস্ত বীজ নষ্ট হয়ে গেছে।

তারপর অনেক জায়গায় বিশেষ করে বাংলার দক্ষিণ অঞ্চলে দেখা গেছে বাঁধের অভাবে ফসল নষ্ট হয়ে যায়। এই টাকা থেকে কোথাও বাঁধের জন্য টাকা খরচ করা হয়েছে বলে জানা যায় না। তারপর famineএর জন্য টাকা ব্যয় হয়েছে কিভাবে দেখুন। Free kitchen খোলা হল কখন যখন দেখা গেল তার দরকার নেই। যখন এবং যেখানে free kitchenএর আবশ্যকতা ছিল না সেখানে হাজার হাজার টাকা ব্যয় করে নিজেদের মনোনীত লোক দিয়ে free kitchen খোলা হল।

তারপর বলা হয় হাজার হাজার কম্বল ও বস্ত্র বিতরণ করা হয়েছে। কাপড় এল কখন না যখন হাজার হাজার লোক মরে ভূত হয়ে গেছে। তারপর কম্বল এল কখন না যখন শীত চলে গেছে। যখন গরম পড়ল তখন লোক দেখানভাবে নিজেদের মনোনীত লোকদের সন্তুষ্ট করবার জন্য কম্বল বিতরণ আরম্ভ হোল। ফাল্গুন মাসে বাংলার লোক—

Mr. CHAIRMAN (Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy): Your time is up.

Mr. PATIRAM ROY : মাত্র দু'মিনিট সময় দিন।

Mr. CHAIRMAN : I am sorry I cannot allow that.

Maulvi AHMED ALI MRIDHA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have heard the speeches of the honourable members of the Opposition for the last three days. They have spoken one word here and one word there against the budget. But our surmise is that there is not a word to be said against the budget and the members of the Opposition have not courage

enough to take their stand on true facts. Sir, I do not use the words just to congratulate the Hon'ble Finance Minister just for the virility of the language but, Sir, I would only like to tell the House that we on this side of the House are entirely satisfied with the provisions that have been made in the budget for the coming year. If anybody wants to say anything against the provisions, he will not be giving a correct picture of the situation. That is why I say, Sir, that my friends opposite have not taken into consideration even a single item of the budget; they have not criticised a single item of the budget. They have only harped on the old theme of saying "People are suffering on account of famine and the Ministry is not doing anything."

Sir, this reminds me of a situation that was created in my village by a young boy. He set fire to a house and when the fire was ablaze, the house was about to be burnt down and the conflagration was going to spread, he was dancing with joy and cried: "Who is there? Just come forward and put out the fire." Sir, such an attitude is only befitting of a madcap and not of any other man with any grain of sense.

Everybody knows that the last Government had to be thrown out on the 29th March and the present Government came into office on the 24th April (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Or thrust into office). Everybody knows that in July 1942 crops in different parts of Bengal were destroyed. At least in my village I can tell the House there was complete destruction of *aman* and *aus* crops. By July 1942 we became landless. I myself appealed to the then Cabinet members. I approached Mr. Pramatha Nath Banerjee; unfortunately he is not here at the present moment. On many occasions I approached the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca as he was then the Food Supply Minister, but he pleaded inability to help us. That was the position, Sir. This tragic situation continued until the influx of natural calamities, and we had torrents of death. The prices of foodstuffs were soaring high and still nothing was being procured. There was no procurement scheme to get foodgrains from outside the province. No information was sent to the Central Government or to England about the food shortage. The whole thing was kept as a secret. Then there was a tragic development and ultimately the old Ministry had to walk out, and the new Ministry came into office. The House was thoroughly dissatisfied with the conduct of Government by the old Ministry and the province was also similarly dissatisfied. They had to make room for better men. Now, Sir, the situation at that time was as if the house had been on fire, the fire was ablaze and nobody was anxious to put out the fire. And then the present Ministry assumed office on the 24th April. Now, Sir, anybody who has got ability and imagination will admit that it will take some time to tackle the food problem in all its immensity and in all its dimensions. Foodgrains have to be moved from the United Provinces, Central Provinces, the Punjab and even beyond the sea, from the neighbouring provinces of Assam and Bihar. Nobody knows what difficulties were created by the Congress and by the Government in those places, so that foodgrains could not be brought and local sympathy could not be aroused, because there was nothing in black and white in the Secretariat to show that there was any well thought out plan.

The situation was there in Bengal. Therefore, Sir, the calamity was there and all of a sudden it could not be tackled overnight. It was due to failures of men belonging to the last Government. The great men of Bengal, the present Ministry, specially the Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy, the Hon'ble Mr. Goswami and the Hon'ble Sir Nazimuddin, tried to put things right not once but many times. Everyday they were busy, busy making all sorts of efforts to put themselves in possession of reliable materials for the presentation of a representation to the Government of India. Whatever could be humanly done was done. You know, Sir, Lord Wavell came to Calcutta when the information was there available after the food drive. It was only as a result of the food drive that the Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy was able to place all the facts before the Government of India. Then alone Lord Wavell took interest in Bengal. He came to Calcutta, saw the picture with his own eyes and was impressed with the terrible conditions then prevailing in the city. He also visited rural Bengal and then the military help could be had. Once it started coming, it came in sufficient measure. Now we are happy and there is not much misery. The machinery is definite and complete. We are getting everything and we feel that there is not much room to be anxious about but the members of the Opposition in their wisdom tell us half truths sometimes, untruths sometimes and also falsehoods on other occasions. If steps are taken to control prices, they say that stocks must be had first and if any measures are taken to check any fall in prices, they come and tell us that a minimum price has not been settled. These are the kinds of talks which we hear from the opposition side. They have in their wisdom behaved in this non-helpful way. It is not worthy of them to behave in this way. They would like to see the people continue to suffer. Their voice has no effect on the country. That is the situation.

In the first page of his Budget speech, the Hon'ble Finance Minister has referred to the estimates under three heads, viz., "63—Extraordinary Charges in India", "54—Famine" and "40—Agriculture". These are the three subjects to which he has paid his best attention. The provisions under Extraordinary Charges have been explained. Anybody who looks through them will see what Government have done and are doing and the Members of the Opposition do not care to read.

I have only a few minutes more at my disposal and I hope you will be kind to me for I have many things to say. The members of the Opposition do not know the situation in the countryside. They make only speeches here and we are the people who know where the shoe pinches. We know what hunger is. Just consider what was the situation in the countryside before! Today we find the "Grow More Food" campaign is having its effect. The cattle are purchased for the poor. Today we are in a position to see that peace prevails in the countryside. Today we also see many other things—sanitation, rural public health, etc., in the countryside. They are getting enough money for these purposes. When we see how attempts are made to look into the grievances of people and remedy them, we cannot but have admiration for the present Ministry. We cannot but admire them unless of course we have our eyes shut. We must say "Bravo, to the Treasury Bench. We do congratulate you. We have come here

to tell you that we are grateful for what the Government have done. The poor people want more and that is the demand of the country. We are getting and the people are getting. Try and get us more".

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your time is up.

Maulvi AHMED ALI MRIDHA: One minute more, Sir. The position is this. There are some difficulties which we all know. I would repeat "We know you are moving in the matter. You please keep on moving for the removal of all obstacles that may be there. We know that you are busy and you are moving in the matter. But please be quick". Sugar we may or may not have at present. But there are enough possibilities of producing sugarcane in sufficient quantities. For producing sugarcane, please take by any means whatsoever all steps at your command for the help of the Treasury, the help of the Police and any other agency. Sugarcane is the best problem before the country.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your time is over. Please sit down.

Maulvi AHMED ALI MRIDHA: I do not object to the deserters of the Muslim League and of the Congress. (Interruption.) They are now in difficulties and we do not care for them. The country does not care for them. (Interruption.) I say to the Congress—official Congress Party—come forward and come over to the Muslim League. (Interruption.) They know the people. We do not care for religion. The country is in such a position that it could not have anybody else. These people want independence of defeatists. Defeatism is backward in any walk of life——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your time is up. Please sit down.

Maulvi AHMED ALI MRIDHA: I hope His Excellency will understand——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have allotted 10 minutes for each speaker and I have given notice of this before. You have taken 15 minutes and I cannot allow you any more time.

Dr. SARAT CHANDRA MUKHERJEE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, গড্ডালিকা-প্রবাহের মত সরকারী কার্য্য চলিয়া যাইতেছে সহস্র বাধা-বিঘ্ন তাহা রোধ করিতে পারে না। চাকা ঘুরিতেছে, কল চলে, ঘুরিয়া ফিরিয়া আবার আসে, আবার যায়। তাহার প্রত্যেকটি খুঁটিনাটি লিপিবদ্ধ হইয়া যথাস্থলে বিরাজ করে এবং আবশ্যক হইলে সেই সমস্ত অনুলিপি জগতের কাছে সাক্ষীস্বরূপে প্রকটিত হয়। পূর্ব্বের মত এ দুর্যোগের বৎসরেও অর্থ-সচিব মহাশয় তাঁহার বাজেট অভিভাষণ পরিষদের সম্মুখে উপস্থাপিত করিয়াছেন। দেশে দুর্ভিক্ষ, মহামারী, জলপ্লাবন, ভূমিকম্প চিরস্থায়ী বন্দোবস্ত করিতে বসিয়াছে। অভুক্ত ও আতুরের মর্ম্মন্তুদ আর্ত্তনাদে আকাশ-বাতাস খুরিত এবং নিপীড়িত জনসাধারণের অশ্রু-প্রবাহ দেশকে প্লাবিত করিয়াছে কিন্তু সরকারী রক্তাক্ত শকট সবেগে চলিয়াছে; সারথী চোখে কিছু দেখে না, কর্ণেও কিছু শুনে না। অর্থসচিব মহোদয়ের বাজেটের অভিভাষণখানি যত্নের সহিত সুললিত ছন্দে লিখিত, কিন্তু sugar-coated quinine pillএর মত বিষপূর্ণ। প্রায় ২৫ কোটি টাকার ঘাটতি লইয়া উপস্থিত। এই টাকা আমাদের মঞ্জুর করিতে হইবে, আবশ্যকীয় অর্থ না দিলে চলিবে কেমন করিয়া। অর্থসচিব মহাশয় তাঁহার কৈফিয়তে Extraordinary Charges in India, Famine এবং Agriculture খাতে বহু অর্থের ব্যয় দেখাইয়াছেন। খরচের বাবদগুলিও বেশ শ্রুতিমধুর কিন্তু এই বিপুল অর্থ কেমন করিয়া, কোথায়, কিভাবে ব্যয়

হইল তাহা অনুসন্ধান করার প্রয়োজন আছে একথা কেহ ভাবিয়া দেখেন নাই। শতকরা কত টাকা সত্য সত্যই অনুকল্পিত কাজে ব্যয় হয়, কত টাকা হিসাবে গোলমাল হয় এবং কত টাকা কৌশলক্রমে গোপনীয় স্থানে অন্তর্হিত হয় এ বিষয়ে কেহ কি নিরপেক্ষভাবে চিন্তা করিয়া দেখিয়াছেন? যদি কেহ দেখেন জানিতে পারিবেন জনসাধারণের রক্ত-জল-করা অর্থের কি ঘৃণিত পরিণাম। দুর্ভাগ্যের কথা, আমাদের মত নিঃসহায় কেহ নাই। যাঁহারা আমাদের অভিভাবকত্ব দাবী করেন তাঁহারা জড়ের মত উদাসীন। অবশিষ্ট যাঁহারা আছেন তাঁহারা ক্লীবের অবতার। অবিশ্রান্ত দৈন্যের চাপে তাহারা সব হারাইয়া বসিয়াছে।

দেশের বর্তমান দুরবস্থার মূল কারণ কি একথা বিচার করিয়া দেখিলে সুস্পষ্ট প্রতীয়মান হইবে যে ইহার একমাত্র কারণ ইউরোপীয় মহাযুদ্ধ। এই যুদ্ধের সহিত ভারতের কোন সম্বন্ধ বা বাধ্যবাধকতা নাই, ছিল না এবং ভবিষ্যতেও থাকা উচিত নয়। ইহার জন্য যত উপসর্গ দেখা দিয়াছে তাহাতে ভারতের কোন দায়িত্ব নাই। মূলতঃ যাহারা যুদ্ধের সহিত সরাসরিভাবে সংশ্লিষ্ট তাঁহারাই ভারতবর্ষের এই শোচনীয় দুর্দ্দশার জন্য দায়ী। যুদ্ধের প্রারম্ভে তদানীন্তন প্রাদেশিক গভর্ণমেণ্ট এই যুদ্ধের সহিত কোন সম্বন্ধই রাখিতে চাহেন নাই। অপ্রত্যাশিতভাবে একদিন সুপ্রভাতে পাশ্চাত্য দেশের পাশবিক যুদ্ধের সহিত ভারতবর্ষের অবাঞ্ছনীয় সম্বন্ধ সরকার বাহাদুর স্বেচ্ছায় কাহারও মতামত না লইয়া ঘোষণা করিয়া জয়ধ্বনি করিলেন। বোম্বে, মাদ্রাজ, বিহার, মধ্য প্রদেশ, যুক্তপ্রদেশ এবং উড়িষ্যার মন্ত্রিগণ তাঁহাদের কার্য্যে ইস্তাফা দিলেন। সরকার বাহাদুর ৯৩ ধারার জোরে ৬টি প্রদেশের শাসনভার নিজ হস্তে গ্রহণ করিলেন। সেদিন হইতে যুদ্ধরূপী শনিগ্রহের ক্রিয়া ভারতবর্ষে আরম্ভ হইল। ভারতবাসী নানাভাবে প্রতিবাদ করিলেও ইহার কোন প্রতিকার হয় নাই। কংগ্রেস বলিল বৃটিশের এই সংগ্রামে আমরা কোনও সাহায্য করিব না, দেশ আমাদের। যুদ্ধ তোমাদের, তোমরা কর। কংগ্রেস আরও বলিল quit India—এ দেশ ছাড়িয়া যাও আমরা আমাদের দেশ রক্ষা করিব। ইহাতেও যখন কিছু হইল না তখন ১৯৪২ সালের আগষ্ট মাসে বোম্বাইএ নিখিল ভারত কংগ্রেস কমিটির প্রস্তাব অনুসারে আন্দোলন আরম্ভ হইল। ফলে নেতৃবৃন্দ এবং বিশিষ্ট কর্ম্মিগণ অবরুদ্ধ হইলেন। দুর্দ্দান্ত প্রতাপে দেশের মিরজাফরের দল সরকারের পক্ষ অবলম্বন করিয়া যতদূর সম্ভব যুদ্ধের সহায়তা করিতে লাগিলেন। বাংলার মসনদে বাছাই করা মন্ত্রিগণ তাহার জ্বলন্ত দৃষ্টান্ত। আজ তাই অর্থসচিব মহাশয় তাঁহার বহুপ্রকার ন্যায় ও যুক্তির সংমিশ্রণে ২ বৎসরে প্রায় ২০ কোটি ঘাটতি টাকার একটি ভয়াবহ বাজেট এই পরিষদের সম্মুখে উপস্থাপিত করিয়াছেন। যেভাবে অর্থ বিভিন্ন প্রকার রিলিফের নামে ব্যয়িত হইয়াছে তাহার সমর্থনে বহু যুক্তি দেখাইয়াছেন। গভর্ণমেণ্টের খাদ্যদ্রব্য ক্রয়-বিক্রয়ের কথা ব্যাখ্যা করিয়া গৌরব প্রকাশ করিতেও কুণ্ঠা বোধ করেন নাই। Excise, Stamp এবং other taxes আয়েও বৃদ্ধির কথা বলিতে কার্পণ্য বোধ করেন নাই, এবং তাহার সাথে সাথে বড়লাট বাহাদুরের অপূর্ব্ব করুণার কথা প্রকাশ করিতে তাঁহার লেখনী শতমুখ হইয়াছে।

দুর্ভিক্ষের নিদারুণ পীড়নে বাংলা দেশ যখন মহাশ্মশানে পরিণত হইয়াছে, ব্যাধি-রাক্ষসীর দল যখন দেশময় নৃত্য করিয়া লক্ষ লক্ষ লোককে তাহাদের করাল কবলে নিষ্পেষিত করিয়াছে, চাউলের দাম যখন ৮০৲।১০০৲ টাকা মণ দরে বিক্রীত হইয়াছে, বুভুক্ষু ভিখারীর দল যখন দেশময় হা অন্ন হা অন্ন করিয়া আর্ত্তনাদ করিয়াছে তখন এই যে কোটি কোটি টাকার ব্যয় তাহার সার্থকতা কোথায়? যখন দেশের দুর্দ্দশা চরমে উঠিয়াছে, যখন জনসাধারণ তাহাদের কষ্ট-সঞ্চিত অর্থ লইয়া সাহায্যদানে রত হইলেন তখন বাংলা সরকার লম্বা লম্বা Relief Propaganda আরম্ভ করিলেন। এমনভাবে করিলেন যে সাধারণের সাহায্য-কেন্দ্রগুলি যেন মাথা তুলিতে না পারে। আজ কবি-কল্পিত বাজেট অভিভাষণে নিজেদের কৃতিত্বের কথা প্রকাশ করিতে মন্ত্রী

মহাশয় দ্বিধাবোধ করেন নাই। ইহাও ইঙ্গিত করিয়াছেন যে ভবিষ্যতে আরও বিভিন্ন প্রকার ট্যাক্স ধার্য্য করার প্রয়োজন হইতে পারে। ইতিমধ্যে Sales Tax দ্বিগুণ হইয়াছে। কৃষি-আয় ট্যাক্সও শীঘ্র আরম্ভ হইবে। জনসাধারণ যাহারা এখনও সৌভাগ্যক্রমে বাঁচিয়া আছে তাহাদের বাঁচিবার আশা থাকিবে না। বাংলা দেশ সত্য সত্যই শ্মশানে পরিণত হইবে। এই পৃথিবীব্যাপী মহাসমরের সহিতও ভারতবর্ষের যোগসূত্র স্থাপনের জন্য সম্পূর্ণ দায়ী বৃটিশ রাজ। বাংলা দেশে এই নব মন্বন্তরের মূল কারণ তাঁহারাই। তাঁহারা ভারতবর্ষের সমস্ত ভার গ্রহণ করিতে ন্যায়তঃ ধর্ম্মতঃ বাধ্য। তাঁহারাই অর্থ সচিব মহাশয়ের দাবী পূরণ করুন। আমরা জনসাধারণের প্রতিনিধিরূপে বাংলা দেশকে আরও গভীরতর দুঃখে প্রোথিত করিবার জন্য কোন-রূপ সাহায্য করিতে প্রস্তুত নহি।

Sir HARI SANKER PAUL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is with an anxious mind that I rise to speak this afternoon. The Hon'ble Finance Minister has given us a dreadful picture of the present day Bengal. The effects of the dire calamity that passed over Bengal last year and disease and pestilence coming in its wake and now stalking the land in all their nakedness have been fully reflected in the Budget presented by Mr. Goswami. The present is horrifying, the future is perplexing, bleak and grim. Staggering deficit has been disclosed in the current Budget. The prospective deficit for the next Budget is equally staggering. The estimates for the current year place the revenue for the current at Rs. 21 crores 34 lacs and that for the next year at Rs. 21 crores 97 lacs. As against this, expenditure for the current year has been put at 32 crores 64 lakhs and that for the next year at Rs. 30 crores and 43 lakhs. The result is that Bengal faces a deficit on revenue account of Rs. 11 crores 20 lakhs in the current year and of Rs. 8 crores 46 lakhs in the next. The total deficit for these two years would thus amount to about 20 crores, a staggering sum. The time is uncertain and unforeseen demands on the Exchequer are almost sure to happen. The actual deficits are therefore likely to be more than what have been calculated by the Finance Minister. I appreciate the difficulties of the Ministry but what is more needed now than ever is the right and tactful handling of the situation with a true and correct perspective of things. The circumstances which have proved to be instrumental in contributing to such huge deficit, I agree, are beyond the control of the province to a great extent.

The Finance Minister has stated that the trading operations of the Government Department of Civil Supplies on account of the procurement and distribution of food-grains would involve the Government in a loss of Rs. 3½ crores and 5 crores in 1943-44 and 1944-45, respectively. In so far as the object of the Government to embark on these trading operations is the ultimate stabilisation of the prices of food-grains and other articles of daily consumption to more reasonable levels and within the purchasing capacity of the masses, it is a laudable one and every one would quite appreciate it as such. Whether the Government have succeeded in their objective is a different question altogether But as in the last year Government have only given us the figures in outline and in round number. They have not placed before the House any details of these trading operations. Allegations have been freely made against the activities of the Civil Supplies Department and great doubts have been expressed in many quarters regarding these transactions being carried on in the proper way. It would have

been in public interest that the Government should have given the fullest details of these trading operations. Such an action would have scotched any public misapprehension on this score and thus raised the Government in the estimation of the public. I would, therefore, very strongly urge on the Government that they should take the House into their fullest confidence and place all facts before it in course of the discussions on the relevant demands for Grants.

I do not, of course, minimise the gravity of circumstances prevailing in Bengal. Bengal is practically in the war zone and it is quite understandable that expenditure for Civil Defence admits of no shirking. And it is quite possible that expenditure under this head would be pretty large. Further the devastating famine that has swept over Bengal last year causing the greatest havoc in the history of the province has also occasioned a huge expenditure to meet the situation and this has added to the size of the deficit in the current Bengal Budget. The Grow More Food Campaign too started on an All-India basis has been undoubtedly responsible for a big expenditure in this province and the continuance of the campaign would also entail a large amount of expenditure to make it a successful proposition.

Now, Sir, this is the dismal picture of the financial and economic situation in Bengal. It is no use blinking facts; and situation however disquieting and terrible has to be faced and the problem of finance has to be tackled in a statesmanlike way to make the best of a bad bargain. Reduction in the volume of expenditure through planned economy is the need of the hour. What is pertinent to observe is how far the Government of Bengal has exercised effective check over the items of expenditure under the heads of famine relief, Grow More Food Campaign, gratuitous relief, cultivation of waste land that have offered a large scope for regrettable malpractices. Besides enforcing strict economy in these and other matters without affecting the efficiency of administration relating thereto there are three recognised methods of meeting deficits: (1) larger subvention from the Centre, (2) borrowing from the Centre, and (3) increased taxation.

On the revenue side, the most significant part of the Budget speech delivered by the Finance Minister is a clear hint for more and more taxation. With the art of an orator, the Hon'ble Minister has tried to present a nice conception of the State as an institution of service justifying the imposition of new taxes whenever necessary. In the midst of complete economic prostration that has laid the province low beyond an early recovery consequent upon the terrible ravages of flood, cyclone, famine and widespread pestilence, it is inconceivable that measures for fresh or enhanced taxation have any scope for imposition. The masses in Bengal have definitely been reduced to a starving nation of beggars helplessly striving to anyhow keep their body and soul together. The cup of Bengal's misery is full to the brim much helped in this respect by the burdens of taxations imposed by the Provincial as well as the Central Governments. And any new measures of taxation at this stage to meet the Bengal's deficit Budget will precipitate her complete collapse beyond all redemption. Only recently, it should not be forgotten, the Chancellor of Bengal's Exchequer has presented us with two taxation measures of very serious consequence to all sections of the community—I mean the increase in the rate of Sales Tax and the

Bengal Agricultural Income-tax Bill on the point of definite enactment. We must not lose sight of the fact that from 15 crores the figures of the normal budget Bengal's revenue has been forced up to 22 crores or thereabout in a ruthless manner. And there is definitely no scope for any increase in it through fresh taxations. Then again borrowing from the Centre has been pursued relentlessly. I cannot entertain this idea any more as this tantamounts to nothing short of mortgaging the future of the province which we can ill-afford to do with the future well-being of the province at heart. The only course left to us is to secure subvention from the Centre to meet the huge deficits. Famine has been recognised by Lord Wavell to be an all-India problem and naturally the financial obligations should therefore be an all-India one and funds to meet the expenditure in this respect should be in all propriety secured from the Centre. The Grow More Food Campaign has certainly the same merits to deserve being financially helped by the Centre. In fact, a substantial subvention from the Centre is not only the one course left to us to fall back upon but it is the most reasonable and effective way through which the province can wriggle out of its staggering difficulties and be saved from the impending disaster and complete ruination.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Sir, the budget discloses a deficit of Rs. 10 crores and 65 lakhs of which the Hon'ble Finance Minister is not afraid or ashamed. The deficit is sought to be explained mainly by three items, viz., Extraordinary Charges, Famine Relief and Agriculture. The two big accounts under Extraordinary Charges are Civil Defence and Civil Supplies, the former consuming 1 crore and the latter 4½ crores.

Of 1 crore under Civil Defence more than one-third goes to the construction of air-raid shelters. From the manner and the materials with which these shelters are generally constructed, one has reasons to suspect that a considerable portion of this amount goes to anything but making the pits usable and the structures strong and dependable. Quite a lot goes to provide the "Burra Sahib's", "the Chhota Sahib's" "my pound of flesh". I believe that considerable economy may be practised in this direction if proper scrutiny of tenders is insisted upon and proper supervision maintained with a little honesty at the Centre.

Of 4½ crores under Civil Supplies the cost of the Department is 1 crore, the balance being accounted for by the losses on the Department's trading operations. The Hon'ble Finance Minister assures us that there will be further losses on final adjustment of the account.

It seems that the newly created Civil Supplies Department is vying with the much pampered Police Department in consuming the tax-payer's money. This year it is one-third and the next year it will be one-half of the police account. It is absurd. I wonder if the Government mean to make the Department look respectable by making it costlier from day to day. Thinking of the manner the Government have appointed the extravagantly highly paid staff and the numerous hands to handle civil supplies and also thinking of the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies with a princely salary and with what else I don't know at the head and of the millions of people dying for want of a morsel of food, I am reminded of the following

two lines from a Chinese poet who describes a similar catastrophe in his own unhappy land—

"Meats and wines are rotting in the mansions,
And human bones are rotting outside their doors.

The procurement operations of the Civil Supplies Department which cause the Government enormous losses should be subjected to the scrutiny of a competent body of experts. In the absence of such an examination we cannot be satisfied that the procuring agents are not making capital out of people's starvation in more ways than one in collusion with others who are in a position to help them.

On Agriculture which claims 1 crore and 35 lakhs of rupees I shall rest content with the observation that all money spent on mere propaganda is a futile waste. The kind of "Grow More Food" propaganda that the Government do, viz., by posters in the city walls and by slides in the city cinemas and notices in gentlemen's newspapers, would be something if it were intended to grow "*aus*" and "*aman*" paddy in the streets of Calcutta, Dacca and other district towns.

Among other items that go to account for the deficit is the Jail account which marks an increase of 150 per cent. over the last year. The Hon'ble Finance Minister explains that this is due to the increase in the value of foodgrains. May be to a great extent; but does he know that there is another bottomless pit in jails which has to be fed perpetually, viz., the cupidity of the jail officials? I have known it personally as a prisoner in the Dacca Central Jail years back and have had it confirmed recently as a non-official visitor of the same jail. It is high time the Government took some steps to close this pit.

Another big item outside Extraordinary Charges is the provision of Rs. 109 lakhs for the repair of the Damodar Embankment. In this connection I may only mention that the Damodar embankment is esesntial for all-India communications especially the East Indian Railway which is a Government of India concern. So the Government of India should be asked to bear a substantial portion of the costs.

So much for the justifiability of the deficit. The deficit might have been a little more if the Government cared to spend a little on items that really deserve consideration. I may only mention two. The educational black out in secondary schools and primary schools has been allowed to remain. Secondly, the case of the security prisoners has gone by default. Small allowances have indeed been granted to the members of the families of some security prisoners; others have been left practically to starvation. Security prisoners lying seriously ill and hovering between life and death cannot have medicines and diet according to medical prescriptions, because, as the Government say, there is no provision. I do not know whether this is economy or——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: I have spoken of the deficit. It does not require much argument to be satisfied that there must be some deficit in these abnormal times and circumstances. Let us assume for argument's

sake that the deficit has not been big considering the circumstances, but how to meet it is the real question——

The Hon'ble Mr. K. SHAHABUDDIN: Is there any quorum, Sir?

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, is it not a matter of privilege for the House to demand that Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries who are paid out of the public exchequer should remain here, so that the quorum might continue?

The Hon'ble Mr. K. SHAHABUDDIN: It is more obligatory on the part of the Opposition to be present at the time of discusison. Just look at the benches of the Opposition.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Opposition Benches are much fuller than the Coalition Benches. Disgraceful.

The Hon'ble Mr. K. SHAHABUDDIN: Equal, equal.

Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: Not equal. I wish that they were!

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no quorum.

Adjournment.

The House was accordingly adjourned at 12-45 p.m. till 3-30 p.m. on Monday, the 28th February, 1944, in the Assembly House, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Monday, the 28th February, 1944, at 3-30 p.m.

Present:

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. SYED JALALUDDIN HASHEMY) in the Chair, 11 Hon'ble Ministers and 181 members.

STARRED QUESTION

(to which oral answer was given)

Grant of family allowance to security prisoner Sj. Dinesh Chandra Roy.

*128. **Mr. SIBNATH BANERJEE:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Jails) Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that—

(*i*) Sj. Dinesh Chandra Roy, now in Dum Dum Central Jail, has been in detention for about one year under rule 26, Defence of India Rules;

(*ii*) he has not been granted any family allowance;

(*iii*) he was the only earning member of the family;

(*iv*) his income per month was between Rs.60 to Rs.80;

(*v*) his house in Burdwan district got completely burnt with all furniture, clothes and other belongings at the end of May, 1943;

(*vi*) his old mother, wife and son are in great distress specially after the burning of the house;

(*vii*) he sent numerous petitions for being released on parole and for a reasonable family allowance;

(*viii*) he has received no reply to his repeated representations; and

(*ix*) the attention of the Hon'ble Minister was drawn to these facts in two letters by a member of this House?

(*b*) Is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of giving immediate relief to the starving family of Sj. Dinesh Chandra Roy?

MINISTER in charge of the HOME DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) (*i*) and (*iii*) to (*vi*) Yes.

(*ii*) An allowance of Rs.50 per month has been sanctioned.

(*vii*) Several petitions were received from him for release and family allowance.

(*viii*) Both the prisoner and his wife have been informed of the fact of grant of allowance.

(*ix*) Yes, but the number of letters received seems to be only one and not two.

(*b*) The honourable member is referred to the reply given to question (*a*)(*ii*).

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(answers to which were laid on the table)

Decrease in the number of cattle used for agriculture.

57. Maulana Md. MANIRUZZAMAN ISLAMABADI: (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Agriculture Department aware of the fact that—

(*i*) killing of cattle for military consumption and unusual cattle mortality have decreased the number of cattle used for agriculture;

(*ii*) the prices of cattle have increased by five or six times the pre-war level; and

(*iii*) many cultivators have stopped their cultivation for want of cattle and due to their inability to purchase cattle?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of taking any steps in the matter?

MINISTER in charge of the AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed Muazzamuddin Hosain): (*a*) (*i*) Government are aware that in certain areas loss of plough cattle has resulted from disease, starvation and military requirements for meat.

(*ii*) Yes, though not exactly to the extent mentioned in all areas.

(*iii*) No, though Government are aware that cultivators are experiencing great difficulty in procuring plough cattle.

(*b*) Yes:

(*i*) The honourable member's attention is drawn to the statement made in this House by the Hon'ble Chief Minister on the resolution about measures for stopping the slaughter of cattle moved by Dr. Dhirendranath Sen.

(*ii*) Agricultural loans have been distributed in some districts to enable cultivators to purchase cattle. Government are also taking immediate steps to enable cultivators to get more plough cattle by (1) granting them loans and (2) inducing dealers to bring more cattle to areas where they are urgently wanted. For the latter purpose dealers are being offered certain facilities.

(*iii*) All necessary steps have been and continue to be taken to combat cattle epidemics.

Babu MADHUSUDAN SARKAR: With reference to answer (*b*) (*ii*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he is aware that the agricultural loan that is given to agriculturist for the purchase of cattle in view of the rise in price is quite insufficient for the purchase of cattle?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Yes, I am aware. So instructions are being issued to grant loans liberally this time for the purchase of cattle.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state, if he is aware, that, inspite of the assurances given on the floor of the House that sales for the military may be prevented, sales are now

taking place and only yesterday evening it was noticed that at Lalgola Ghat a large number of boat-loads of cattle were purchased and taken to Dacca side?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: I think that the assurance that has been given by the Hon'ble Chief Minister is to see that the military are not purchasing themselves. But now the contractors of the military are purchasing.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is aware that the military personnel hardly ever buy direct but they generally go through the contractors?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: That may be.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Government are considering the desirability of stopping such purchases which ultimately may go to the military and thereby cause depletion of livestock supply in the rural areas?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Government is very seriously considering this matter.

Khan Bahadur Haji BADI AHMED CHOUDHURY: Sir, যে সমস্ত লোকের নিজের জমি-জমা নাই কিন্তু অন্যের জমি চাস করার কাজ নির্বাহ করে তাদের গরু মারা গেলে কোথায় পাওয়া যাবে।

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: আপনি কি বলছেন বুঝতে পারছিনে ভালো করে বলুন।

Khan Bahadur Haji BADI AHMED CHOUDHURY: আমি তো ভাল করেই বলছি। আমার প্রশ্ন হচ্ছে—যে লোকের নিজের কোন জমি নাই পরের জমি একসনা পত্তনি নিয়ে চাস করে তার গরু যদি মারা যায় তাহলে তার গরু পাবার উপায় কি?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: সে লোক যদি, যে লোকের জমি আছে এমন কোন লোকের সঙ্গে একত্র হয়ে দরখাস্ত করে তাহলেই পেতে পারে।

Khan Bahadur Haji BADI AHMED CHOUDHURY: যার জমি-জমা নাই তার অন্য লোক সাথিমি লে না।

(No answer.)

Mr. J. W. CHIPPENDALE: Will the Government be pleased to state why they have not answered question (*a*) (*iii*)?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I cannot help it. That is a matter of opinion.

Mr. J. W. CHIPPENDALE: That is not a matter of opinion at all. The question has not been answered.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. That is not my business. My business is only to see the propriety of the question, and the answer. There is no provision in any rule to see what sort of reply Government should give.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Government is not aware that cultivation has been stopped but difficulties

are being experienced in many parts by the cultivators for want of cattle and Government is taking every possible step to replenish the depleted stock of cattle.

Khan Bahadur Maulvi FAZLUL QUADIR: Will the Hon'ble Minister consider the desirability of passing an Ordinance to stop the sale of cattle below the age of ten and also bull-calves?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Some such order has been passed by the Government of India but it has not been effective and we are considering seriously whether we can do anything in the matter.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the "Grow More Food" Committee made any recommendation to the Government regarding importing cattle from outside?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Yes, they have made such a recommendation.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be prepared to renew his representation to the military authority in view of the practical unanimity of the House on this question?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: We have been urging upon the Government of India for action in this matter.

Cases of imposition and realisation of collective fines.

58. Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state what action, if any, has been taken by Government so far to review or re-examine the cases of imposition and realisation of collective fines regarding which petitions have been received by Government or complaints were voiced in the last session of the Assembly?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether he has received any representation from some affected persons of Beldanga and Jiagunge in the district of Murshidabad and Muragacha in the Nadia district; and

(*ii*) if so, what action, if any, has been taken on the same?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what are the steps taken and the procedure adopted by the local officials in the realisation of collective fines?

(*d*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government are considering the desirability of suspending the levy of collective fines in view of the present political situation and changed atmosphere?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: (*a*) and (*b*) I am not in a position to explain the action taken by the late Ministry in this matter. In the only case pending when we took office, that of Muragacha, the petitioners were informed that Government was not prepared to interfere with the decision already taken. I do not propose to review or re-examine these cases: save on the 1st May in Rampurhat police-station (Birbhum), on the 5th June in Bagnan police-station (Howrah), and recently in Dacca town,

to the best of my information no collective fine has been imposed since the 24th April, 1943. A representation was received from the inhabitants of Bagnan police-station. The petitioners were informed as in the case of Muragacha. Another representation received from the inhabitants of Dacca town is under consideration.

(*c*) I refer the honourable member to sub-section (*4*) of section 3 of the Collective Fines Ordinance.

(*d*) Fines are imposed for definite acts of lawlessness: if these do not occur there will be no fines; and the present "political atmosphere" is no ground for reviewing the imposition of fines for disturbances which have already occurred, in some cases many months ago.

Import and export of foodstuff in and from Bengal.

55. Mr. PRATUL CHANDRA GANGULI: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Civil Supplies Department be pleased to state whether it is in the contemplation of Government to arrange for bringing of foodstuffs from United States of America, Canada and Australia?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the negative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason thereof?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government have prohibited the export of foodstuff from Bengal?

(*d*) If the answer to (*c*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that rice is being exported from Bengal?

(*e*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason thereof?

(*f*) Is it a fact that rice is being purchased by agencies even from deficit and flood-stricken districts for the purpose of exporting them outside the Province?

(*g*) If the answers to (*c*), (*d*) and (*e*) are in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps have been taken to stop those practices?

(*h*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) when the scarcity of foodstuff is likely to be removed; and

(*ii*) when the prices are likely to come down according to the purchasing capacity of the common people?

MINISTER in charge of the CIVIL SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy): (*a*) Several shiploads of foodgrains have already been imported under arrangement made by His Majesty's Government.

(*b*), (*e*) and (*g*) Do not arise.

(*c*) The export of foodgrains from Bengal has been prohibited.

(*d*) and (*f*) No.

(*h*) (*i*) There is at present no scarcity of foodgrains in Bengal.

(*ii*) Prices have also come down considerably.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us when the last import of foodgrains arrived from abroad?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: They have been arriving frequently but I am not aware when the last consignment came.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to consider the desirability of bringing in further foodstuffs from abroad?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Imports are still continuing to arrive; they have not stopped.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that with regard to the answer (*h*) (*i*) rice is not available in any of the markets in the district of Tippera?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Sir, I beg to submit that this question does not arise.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us what is the prevailing price of rice in the district of Tippera?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Certain orders have been issued from time to time regarding limiting the price of rice. The maximum price, I understand, is Rs. 15 per maund wholesale.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that the price of rice in the district of Tippera varies from Rs. 19 to Rs. 22?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: No, Sir, I am not aware of that.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be prepared to make an enquiry into the matter and see if rice is available at the controlled rate in Tippera?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Yes, Sir; but I have been trying to impress upon you, Sir, that what the honourable member is asking does not arise out of this question.

STARRED QUESTION

(to which oral answer was given)

Opening of controlled shop and supply of paddy in Jessore district.

***110. Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Civil Supplies Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) what is the amount of rice that the Government have distributed up to date in the district of Jessore to sell at control price;

(*ii*) whether any controlled shop has been opened to sell rice in the district;

(*iii*) if so,—

(1) the number, and

(2) locations,

of such shops;

(*iv*) what measures have been adopted up to date to relieve the people of Jessore to get rice at a moderate price; and

(*v*) the number of people in the said district that are passing their days in starvation?

(*b*) Do the Government contemplate to sell some quantity of rice at controlled rate to certain rich men of the district for free distribution amongst the poorer classes of people?

(*c*) If the reply to (*b*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what action he proposes to take in the matter?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: On the 5th July, 1943, the answer was as follows:—

Point of Order.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir. Is it permissible for the Hon'ble Minister to answer in a manner which clearly shows that it is not an answer of the present time? You will notice that he starts saying, "On the 5th July, the answer was as follows:" We are entitled to have an answer now and here and not an antediluvian answer of six months ago. Is it permissible or do the rules provide for an answer of this character?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have got to ascertain when the notice of this question was first given, and I think, it would be better if this question is held over once again so that I may look into the propriety or otherwise of the answer.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: In the meantime, Sir, the Hon'ble Minister may be requested to so revise the answer as to make it up to date.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: The position regarding this and certain similar other questions is that actually the answers to these questions are of no interest at this stage. I would not like to answer them at all, but if I have to answer, they have to be referred to the period of time when the question was asked. Now, Sir, I have passed several aneswers started in this form. If the honourable member desires that these questions should not be answered as not being of any interest to them, I would request that your office may withdraw these questions.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I suggest that this question be once again held over and in the meantime the Government and the Opposition should try to come to an agreement as to the form in which the answers are to be given.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, we are certainly prepared to co-operate in finding out whether any questions that have gone out of date should be withdrawn, substituted or modified suitably. But there ought to be in the body of the answer what action is now being taken as against what action was taken when the question was tabled.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, as I have said, it would be better if this question be held over, and let us then put our heads together.

(This question was accordingly held over.)

UNSTARRED QUESTION

(answer to which was laid on the table)

Output of standard cloth of the Bengal Mills and their distribution.

47. Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Civil Supplies Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) what has been the output of standard cloth from the Bengal Cotton Mills up to date;

(*ii*) the quantity of standard cloth supplied up till now to Bengal as against the quota allotted to the Province;

(*iii*) whether it is a fact that the Directorate of Civil Supplies in Bengal requested the Cotton Textile Directorate to withhold all supplies to Bengal; and

(*iv*) if so, why?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) what scheme for distribution of standard cloth has been framed by Government;

(*ii*) whether it is a fact that retailers of standard cloth are insisting that the party for whom a *saree* is to be purchased must appear at the shop for taking delivery; and

(*iii*) if so, how it will be possible for *purdanashin* women to get supply of standard cloth?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: (*a*) (*i*) This Government do not deal with mills and have no information.

(*ii*) The quota due up to July, 1943, is 1·02 *plus* 6·16 *plus* 7·77 million yards or 14·95 million yards. The bulk of supplies of the first allotment has been received. Supplies of the second allotment are now arriving. Exact figures cannot be given without reference to districts.

(*iii*) No.

(*iv*) Does not arise.

(*b*) (*i*) Distribution to the poorer sections of population both in rural and urban areas through local bodies, selected co-operative societies, charitable and philanthropic organisations, trade unions, selected retail dealers under official and non-official supervision and through large employers with necessary safeguard against profiteering and black marketing.

(*ii*) In Calcutta sale of *sarees* was limited to women for the first few weeks. They are now sold to men also on a fixed day every week.

(*iii*) Does not arise.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: With regard to the question of the quantity of standard cloth to be supplied by Bengal Mills and their distribution and with reference to the answer (*a*) (*ii*)—the quota up to July, 1943, is the Hon'ble Minister in a position to give the information if the quota allotted to respective mills for production and supply of standard cloth in Bengal has been complied with by the respective mills?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: No, Sir, I am not in a position to give that answer, but I shall make an enquiry. In fact, I am making an enquiry in order to bring my knowledge up to date.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is in a position to answer whether the quota allotted to the province of Bengal from the all-India pool has been fully received or taken delivery of by the province of Bengal?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: No, Sir. There has been delay in sending the quota, and as the quotas that have been allotted to the province of Bengal were not of suitable sizes, we have had the quotas revised and it is hoped that suitable quotas will be sent to Bengal in future.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is aware that large production of surplus standard cloth has been lying with mills in Bombay and Ahmedabad for a pretty long time undelivered to respective provinces?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: I am not aware of other provinces, but certainly as regards Bengal large quantities were held up in Bombay owing to want of transport.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government is considering the desirability of submitting to the Government of India necessary representation to enhance the allotment of quota to Bengal so that Bengal, at any rate, may have larger quantities of standard cloth provided in view of the economic condition prevailing in this province, together with the necessary transport facilities arranged for the same?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Sir all necessary representations have been made and will continue to be made because we shall never be able to get as much standard cloth as this province actually needs. The Government of India is fully aware of our necessities

Observations of Mr. Deputy Speaker on the points of order raised by Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal and Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri on 24th February, 1944.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: On the 24th February last Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal on a point of order raised the question whether it is permissible under section 81 of the Government of India Act, 1935, to include in a supplementary statement showing the estimated amount of expenditure over and above the expenditure theretofore authorised for any financial year any amount of expenditure which has already been incurred during the year in excess of the grants voted by the Assembly. His contention is that under section 81 of the Government of India Act, Government must come to the House immediately they discover that a larger expenditure—more than what was provided in the original estimate by this House—is going to be incurred.

Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri in another point of order contended that section 81 of the Government of India Act provides for supplementary estimates and it does not provide for placing for the approval of the legislature expenses already incurred and accordingly both the statement and the speech of the Hon'ble the Finance Minister were out of order.

The point of view of Government as represented by the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin and the Hon'ble the Finance Minister is that it is the practice and it has been the practice of every Government in every province

to submit estimates under this section of the Act after the expenditure has been incurred and everything is an estimate until the last day of the financial year, that is, until actuals are known.

I have given my careful consideration to the question raised by Dr. Sanyal and also to the provisions of section 81 of the Government of India Act and the preceding sections laying down procedure in financial matters and I must frankly state at the very outset that the matter has already passed out of my hands and it will prejudice the issue and tighten the hands of Mr. Speaker if I give my ruling one way or the other at this stage. Under the circumstances, it would only be fair and proper on my part now to give a brief exposition of the facts underlying the issue raised and also what may be and not what should be interpretation of "supplementary estimates".

Ever since the inauguration of the Reforms under the Government of India Act, 1935, it has been found that supplementary estimates placed before this House under section 81 of the Act did contain amounts which had been incurred over and above the budgeted sum during a financial year and this practice has been followed from year to year without any protest from any member of this House. It was only on the 25th February, 1942, Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal in the course of a general discussion on the supplementary budget of the year 1941-42 made a passing reference to the issue raised here He said: "I submit that it should be possible for Government to come up to Assembly earlier in the course of the year, if additional provisions are necessary, probably during the Autumn session before the final stages are actually finished" (Assembly Proceedings, Volume LXII, No. 1, page 375.) No specific issue was then raised regarding the interpretation of the section, nor was it contended that the estimates were out of order or *ultra vires*.

Whatever might have been our past practice in this matter, I for myself fail to understand how expenditure in excess of the annual grant could be regularised under the cover of supplementary estimates in a financial year and that too in spite of specific provisions of the Government of India Act. It would not be out of place if I quote here an observation of the President of the Central Legislative Assembly on this very question. He said: "I think the Hon'ble Member (Sir George Rainy) will agree with me when I say that if money has been spent already in excess of the grant voted by the Assembly the Government can only come by way of a motion for excess grant. That is, I understand, the right Parliamentary procedure. However as the Hon'ble Member points out that the practice has been in vogue for the last few years, I do not wish to raise any objection at this stage but will see that the procedure is regularised in future." (Legislative Assembly Debates, 16th March, 1929, pages 1989-90.)

It is also my considered view that the passing of the annual budget would lose all its significance if Government are allowed to spend money in the way they have been doing now without any check in excess of the annual grant subsequently regularising the excess expenditure by way of supplementary estimates; and no democratic institution should tolerate it. In this connection I place before you a resolution passed so far back as 30th March, 1849, by the House of Commons on the question of excess expenditure. The resolution runs thus: "When a certain amount of expenditure for a particular service has been determined upon by Parliament, it is the

bounden duty of the Department which has that service under its charge and control, to take care that the expenditure does not exceed the amount placed at its disposal for that purpose." (May's Parliamentary Practice, page 501.)

Now let me pass on to the term "Supplementary Estimates". May in his Parliamentary Practice thus observes:

"A supplementary estimate may be presented either for a further grant to a service already sanctioned by Parliament in addition to the sum already demanded for the current financial year, or for a grant caused by a fresh occasion for expenditure that has arisen since the presentation of the sessional estimates such as expenditure imposed upon the executive Government by statute, or to meet the cost created by an unexpected emergency, such as an immediate addition to an existing service, or the purchase of land, or of a work of art." (May's Parliamentary Practice, page 500.)

Now it is for Mr. Speaker to decide whether by any stretch of imagination expenditure in excess of the sum already demanded for the current financial year can be construed as estimates specially when the amount of such an expenditure is mixed up with supplementary estimates. In my view this interpretation cannot be possible in any other country than in India where it has become possible under the garb of "usual practice". I have already quoted the observation of the President of the Central Legislative Assembly in this respect and it was in connection with an explanation of Sir George Rainy when he said that the greater part of the supplementary demand asked for had already been incurred and it had been the "usual practice". (Legislative Assembly Debates, 16th March, 1929, pages 1989-90.) I refrain from making any comment on the explanation given by the Hon'ble the Finance Minister in our House given to the term "Supplementary Estimates".

It has been said by the Hon'ble the Chief Minister that no democratic institution can function effectively and properly if it is expected that Government must wait for obtaining the approval of the legislature before incurring any expenditure in excess of the allotted sum provided for in the budget for any financial year. This is how a trained Parliamentarian and a responsible Minister under a responsible Government views the responsibility of this House and interprets the codified law on the subject—laws not codified by this House, nor by the Central Assembly but by Parliaments of Great Britain where the terms "annual estimates", "supplementary estimates" and "excess grants" have all derived their proper and real significance from the gradual growth of Parliamentary institutions and responsible Government.

I shall not proceed any further in the matter, nor shall I make any comment on the unusual situation in the country as a result of which the supplementary estimates of this year have been placed before this House at the fag end of the financial year and also on the circumstances leading to the passing of the annual estimates for the current year at the last September session of the Assembly beyond this that to meet special circumstances special ways and means have been provided for. It is for the House and Mr. Speaker to decide whether the right Parliamentary procedure has been followed in this respect by the Government and especially the Hon'ble

Ministers responsible to this House. I shall only say this much that there was ample opportunity on the part of the Government to take the House into their confidence beforehand for such unusual expenditure for which no estimates, according to the Hon'ble the Finance Minister, could have been possible to be arrived at earlier.

I shall not also make any observation as to the implication of section 81 of the Government of India Act although I have my views about it and I have given indication of the same before. I leave it to Mr. Speaker and it is for him to decide whether he will allow further stages of the Supplementary Estimates to be gone through in this House.

Point of Order.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: On a point of order, Sir. In view of the ruling just now given, will it not be fair and just that the Hon'ble Minister should be asked to pay the money which has been spent by him in excess?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is no point of order.

Allotment of a day for discussion on Food Situation in Bengal.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on behalf of a very large section of this House may I request you to allot a day for the discussion of the food situation in Bengal, specially the kind of food that is supplied to the people by the Government shops and the shops selected to supply rice?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: May I enquire what is the new situation that has arisen on which you want to make a statement and for the discussion of which you ask me to allot a day?

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: The reason is this. Recently two statments have been made by two responsible and very high officials of the Government of India, namely, Director-General of Food and Food Secretary, which according to the information in our possession are absolutely opposed to facts.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just a minute please. Can you tell me whether the Government of Bengal is in any way responsible?

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Yes, Sir The Director-General has said that he is not convinced that the food supplied is bad and he has also said that the Government of Bengal has informed the Government of India that the food supplied to the people is not unfit for human consumption.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will you resume your seat for a minute? The allotment of a day is not entirely in my hand Of course I realise the gravity of the situation. I also realise at the same time that a day should be selected for this purpose, but I will have to consult the Government Whip whether any date can be fixed for discussion of this important subject. If you all agree with me, it will be better if you ask for the permission of the Speaker who is expected to come tomorrow. I quite realise that a day or at least some hours should be allotted for discussion of this subject, but it will be better if you wait till Mr. Speaker comes back tomorrow.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Will it not be better if a date is fixed and as regards details we wait till Mr. Speaker comes?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Chief Minister is not here, nor have I any time now to discuss with the Chief Whip of Government. I will first discuss the matter with the Chief Whip of Government and then I will inform the House.

Yes, Mr. Sen, I hope you will not take more than five minutes, because I have got a very long list and all responsible leaders will speak today and I have allowed Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi to speak first.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Sir, are we to understand that a day will be given to discuss the question which has been raised by the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I cannot say that now. I shall decide it later on. Yes, Mr. Sen.

General discussion of the Budget.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, our honourable friend Mr. Ahmed Ali Mridha of the Muslim League party speaking on Saturday pleaded for an alliance between the Muslim League party and the Official Congress party for the formation of a Coalition Ministry in Bengal. (Cries of "not exactly, no, no" from the Coalition benches.) We shall certainly welcome the day when the Muslim League party would deserve to persuade the Official Congress party to join with them to make such a Coalition Ministry possible in Bengal. So far as my party is concerned we have systematically refused the repeated overtures from the Muslim League party to join with them in a Coalition Ministry so long as the Muslim League claims to be the sole representative of the Muslim community in India, a claim which the Indian National Congress has refused to concede to them. Sir, I was listening with amused interest to Mr. Mridha's indignant references to the deserters from their respective parties and also, I was watching with no less amusement the rebuke administered to him after his speech by one of the few Hindu deserters from my party who by their desertion made the Muslim League Government possible in Bengal (Nawabzada K. NASARULLAH: Question.) Incidentally Mr. Mridha may look round among the Muslim League High Command in the provincial as well as in the All-India League where he will find foremost positions occupied by people who are really deserters from the Congress. So far as we are concerned in spite of our existing organisational aloofness from the Official Congress our allegiance and attachment to the great and supreme national organisation remain unshaken and unabated. (Applause.)

Now, Sir, reverting to the subject matter of the budget I would conclude by saying that in order to meet this colossal deficit, Government should look to the centre for necessary subventions to which Bengal is more than entitled in the abnormal situation of today.

Sir, with these words I finish.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, before I speak to the main subject of the Financial Statement of the Hon'ble

Minister for Finance, the last speaker requires a bit of clarification in his cerebral extremity, for the simple reason that according to the old Persian saying

چه دلاور است دزدے که به کف چراغ دارد

"How daring is the thief that he carries the lamp in the palm of his hand." He has attacked Muslims knowing full well that he was speaking without his book. Deserters, renegades or whatever term we use can be applied to those only who leave their mother institution and try to form homes of their own. I could understand the Forward Bloc. I could understand even the Bose Group, but the lowest depths have been reached when it has become a Basu Group.

Sir, it is all very well to talk of Mussalmans and the Muslim League, but it is surprising to me that on this day, the 28th February, 1944, there are human beings who still talk in these terms when I know that all the gentlemen sitting opposite are in the pockets of the Working President of the Hindu Mahasabha.

به هر رنگے که خواهی جامه می پوش - من اندازِ قدت را می ستانم

"Cover thyself with any coat of any colour thou wilt: but I have the measure of thy height in my mind."

Let them come in any garb, but to us they are all Mahasabhaites. They dare not goad us into any thoughtless move for the obvious reason that their intentions are neither honest nor friendly

Coming to the subject under discussion of today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it requires great courage and confidence as the Hon'ble the Finance Minister has shown to come out with a depressing and a negative budget. But at the same time, I thank him on behalf of my Chamber and of the mercantile community of Calcutta for the candid and open manner in which he has placed the whole financial picture of Bengal before us. That gives us at least a chance to understand the staggering nature of the task he has undertaken and the courage and determination with which he proposes to deal with it. I can assure him, Sir, that, accustomed as we are to profits and losses and to the ups and downs of trade, he need not be afraid of the difficulties of the present situation. Things will improve. They must improve. Today they look black, but, who knows, tomorrow they may not look so black and dismal! Let him carry on with courage and confidence. Let him have faith in the remedies he has placed before the country. If applied with courage and determination, I am satisfied that he will reach the goal of success. He should not allow himself to be deviated from the path he has chalked out by criticism of an interested nature, by criticism which is neither honest nor fair, by criticism which tries to make political capital out of the agony of 60 million people. Criticism which is helpful, criticism of a friendly character, criticism that would induce all of us unitedly to overcome our difficulties of the day would be of service to the country but those who wallow in the mud of opposition for the sake of opposition have no right to talk of the people of Bengal. They should let their betters, their superiors in honesty and in the spirit of service to the country, to go along unimpeded and without obstruction.

When the day of sunshine comes over the country, they can criticise as they will for we shall have the laugh over them. It was the Chief Minister of the previous Government that went and made a political blunder of the highest magnitude in Delhi. He said that he did not want any assistance. He wanted to be left alone. The result was what you and I, Mr. Deputy Speaker, saw last year. If the energies of an old veteran like the ex-Chief Minister had been directed towards the service of his Hindu and Muslim brothers and not towards the removal of Chairmen of District Boards and Municipalities, I am certain he could have averted even in a small way the disaster that fell upon us. I am very anxious that the Hon'ble Finance Minister shall not repeat that blunder. He must stick to the Government of India like a leech. He must force the Government of India to realise that the calamity was of their making. But for the complacency and carelessness with which the Government of India looked at the war situation, I am again satisfied, in my own way, that the disaster could have been averted. He should give no respite to the men at the Centre. We know the type that is to be found in Delhi and London. Let the present Ministry go ahead. Let it give the Government of India no respite, and I am sure that Rs. 10 crores of deficit which the Hon'ble the Finance Minister visualises, and even more may come to him. Why should it be done and how it can be done has been explained by the honourable member who spoke on behalf of the European Group with wisdom——

(Interruption.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I hope there will be no more interruption.

Mr. A. M. A. ZAMAN: On a point of information.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not allowed.

Mr. A. M. A. ZAMAN: On a point of order, Sir স্যার, আমি জানতে চাচ্ছি আপনার through দিয়ে যে মি: আব্দুর রহমান সিদ্দীকী বাংলাদেশে কত বৎসর যাবৎ আছেন এবং বাংলা সম্বন্ধে তিনি কি জানেন ?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is no point of order. It is frivolous.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Whenever truth is uttered those who practise *satyagraha* seem to run away from it. They do not listen to it. Let them at least keep quiet so that they may some day know and understand what is reality and what is fiction.

Sir, as I was stating, the European Group has recommended only one source and that is that Delhi source should be tapped. I want the Hon'ble Minister for Finance not to stop at Delhi, because what Delhi will give us will come out of the pockets of Indians alone. The disaster in Bengal is not an Indian responsibility and neither is it purely an English responsibility. The war is a total war and all the nations who are called "united" have taken the responsibility for making good loss and devastation caused by the war. It is essential that the Government of Bengal must demand that every pie that has been spent on this disaster and on its alleviation must come out of the common pool of the United Nations. If this is not granted then the lofty ideals preached to us from every corner of the earth on rehabilitation and reconstruction will all be in the nature of humbug. The colossal devastations of and due to the war in Bengal have to be

repaired and the responsibility for that must fall on those who call this war as their own. I am anxious that this point shall receive the attention of the Hon'ble the Finance Minister. He has showed us many directions in which he is going to eliminate disaster and misery. The commercial community is prepared to support him through thick and thin. He can do whatever is necessary for the removal of the distress but I am rather surprised that the Hon'ble the Finance Minister did not mention the question of transportation and when he did refer to it, it was only by way of an "aside". I hope he will use all the influence and power he and his colleagues can command, to induce His Excellency the Governor-General and the Hon'ble Member for War Transport to come to their rescue and to think with them that the question of transportation and carriage of food-grains in Bengal is of the highest importance.

If any district or any subdivision or any union suffers due to lack of transportation the fault will not be ours. I should like to save the Secretary of State for India and His Excellency the Governor-General, his agent in this country, shouting later on that the responsibility lay with the popularly elected Bengal Government and that it did not lie at their door. They must wake up and they must bring to us the means of communication and the means of transportation that are at the moment lacking. The monsoon will be upon us soon and I am anxious that every warehouse and godown in every nook and corner of Bengal is filled to the brim out of what God Almighty has given us through the bumper *aman* crop. The stocks, I feel certain, will go on increasing during the course of the year with the *aus* and *boro* crops as they come in.—(At this stage the member reached the time-limit but was allowed five minutes more.).

Sir, a deficit of almost 30 crores is before us. It is staggering. If the Government of India, if His Majesty's Government in London and if the wiseacres of the United Nations decline to accept or entertain our demand, I am of the opinion that the Hon'ble the Finance Minister should take courage into both his hands. Crippled as we are, it should be possible for us on a long-range plan to see that Bengal is able to carry its heavy burden. We are ready to bear our normal ordinary expenses and we are prepared to bear our quota of war expenses. But the extraordinary charges due to famine and war must come from outside.

I wonder, Sir, if the Hon'ble the Finance Minister will agree with me that borrowing will perhaps be a better policy than taxing. We shall have to borrow more and more. There is no mention of reconstruction except again as an aside. Reconstruction will need money unless the Government has decided to bury it unmourned and unsung. We must borrow crores upon crores. The abolition of the Permanent Settlement will also need borrowing. Let us therefore borrow. These 30 crores will not remain 30. They may go up to 40 or even to 50 during the war which has not yet finished and it may not finish for two years or even more. We should consult experts on how, when and where to borrow rather than taxation experts.

Sir, may I point out to him one or two ways in which he can save some money. The first is that the demand under Law and Order has increased. Law and Order should be brought under order and control. Getting hold

of citizens and putting them without trial into jails and spending money on feeding them and making allowances to their families is a game that has been played too often. A popularly elected Government should protect the liberty of person and freedom from arrest in this year of 1944. People should not be caught at random and put in jails without trial.

Another source which might give some money to the Hon'ble the Finance Minister is to tighten up the screws of the gigantic machinery of the Civil Supplies Department of Bengal. The public and the commercial community feel that there is terrible wastage and also corruption. We have run down hoarders; we have run down members of the trade; and the Hon'ble the Minister for Civil Supplies has also tried to preach to us a change of psychology. Could I appeal to the Finance Minister and his colleagues to switch this screw on to the other side and make the servants of the State also change their psychology. From top to bottom corruption is rampant, and we are spending a hundred where perhaps we could spend fifty.

Sir, another point which I should like to make, if I may, is with regard to the promulgation of Regulation III of 1818. People and even members of this House have been put into jail without trial. Let us remove the old traditions of government in India. Ours is not the pre-autonomy Government, neither is this House an irresponsible House. If our popularly elected Ministers also persist in the enforcement of this ante-diluvian and out of date law, life will become unbearable. If there be trouble they have got ordinances and laws that give them the power to take action quickly. But Regulation III of 1818 is a disgrace and an impossibility. Let them wake up. Let them even take courage and change the old traditions of Government. Let the Indian breathe freely in his own home. For the success of the plans contained in the Financial Statement of the Hon'ble the Finance Minister and for the re-establishment of an ordered economy among the people, it is essential and imperative to bring home to them that the Government of the day is an agency of protection and helpful service rather than an engine of destruction of all that they have held dear politically for years. As I have said, the traditions of the past must go lock stock and barrel: they must give place to modern notions of Government. Even the Governor-General has been forced to the conclusion that the Indian Civil Service has broken down under the stress of the war. Let us build a new world. I know we are passing through bad days but again I would appeal to the Hon'ble the Finance Minister not to give up hope either because of criticism or because of difficulties. Let him go ahead and his faith, his conviction and his sincerity will be rewarded with success by Almighty Allah.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra Goswami's Budget for 1944-45 reveals a dismal picture of extravagance, inefficiency, recklessness and bankruptcy—bankruptcy not only of finance but also of policy, and I do not know how to characterise such an astounding budget as he has presented to the House this time. It casts a gloom over this province not only for the present generation and the coming year but also for many generations and many years to come. It is, as I would like to say, a devastating budget.

The Hon'ble Mr. Goswami is an expert in violation. Our modest Minister in charge of Public Finance has exercised that expert knowledge in violating almost all canons of public finance. He has been candid enough to admit the same in his own statement six months ago but I presume that he will now cry halt in his depredations and violations, for one does not know what will be his next object for violation.

The budget has claimed to unfold the tale of Bengal's famine in 1943 and the measures taken to control and combat it, to deal with its aftermath and to prevent its recurrence. It is stated that three heads—Extraordinary Charges in India, Famine and Agriculture—account for nearly half the total expenditure and this amounts to nearly the whole expenditure of this province in the year 1940-41 and also 1941-42. If recklessness can be recognised as a criterion for success, it must be admitted that Hon'ble Mr. Goswami's budget statement is a great sucess. If provision of expenses under various heads, newly created as well as old, gives solace to the people and meets their grievances one has to admit that Mr. Goswami's government has wiped off all the evils in the province. But, Sir, we have to judge things by their results. The claim of the Government to have tided the famine is too well exposed. The steps that Government have taken so far have invariably been ill-conceived, slow, inadequate and never timely. Whatever little action was attempted there was a complete frustration of all such attempts due to the prevalence of corruption, abject, abuse of power coupled with utter inefficiency in quarters, high and low. At the root of all this failure lies the unwillingness or inability of the Government to secure public confidence and to enlist adequate public support through properly constituted non-official Food and Civil Defence Committees

The two legs that the Government claim to be standing upon, the legs on which Government's plan rests with a view to prevent recurrence of famine, are stated to be their foodgrains procurement and distribution policy and their "Grow More food" campaign. The one leg is lame and the other is paralytic When the time comes we shall take the necessary opportunity to expose how the procurement and distribution plan of Government is lame and limping and already in this House in connection with various discussions and questions it has been revealed without the slightest opposition from any section of the House how the "Grow More Food" campaign has been absolutely paralytic But, Sir, these are not the two legs on which Government are standing. These are merely their front legs They really stand on their two hind legs and these are the distribution of offices and party patronage and the favours of their European masters—official as well as non-official—purchased at the cost of self-respect. A sample of such favour was evidenced only the other day when the President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce in course of a speech before the Bengal Chamber last Friday made certain most irresponsible and mischievous utterances. Mr. Burder said that whoever criticises the food plan of Bengal is a Fifth Columnist. One is not a Fifth Columnist if under the garb of helping the Government in their procurement plan his protegees seek to earn crores of rupees from out of the famished people of Bengal! One is not a Fifth Columnist if under the cloak of trying to get

more wheat crushed for making flour available to the province of Bengal enormous profit per maund is exacted by one or two European firms alone to the exclusion of Indian! Even though an enquiry committee is sought to be tried by no less a person than Mr. Justice Braund such honourable gentlemen pass on as very kind and sympathetic people only devoting themselves to the service of the people here. One is not a Fifth Columnist if in the name of maintaining law and order he tries to trample upon the feelings and the rights of the people in every way and estrange the people of the province completely from the alien Government as well as from Britishers generally! One is not a Fifth Columnist if he tries to take undue advantage of the present situation to create more and more financial burden on the province of Bengal through the patronage extended to European banks and commercial houses, and yet, Sir, curiously enough it is such people that are wise in the counsels of the Government. I could not think of a more mysterious speech than the one delivered over the last week-end, mysterious because I believe that something is going to happen immediately after this speech. I hope to be able to lay before the House tomorrow or the day after some information in this connection.

The Government of Bengal has brought the province to a position of utter bankruptcy and helplessness not merely for one or two generations but probably for all time to come. I have carefully examined the financial position of the province from 1937-38 to 1944-45 as it will be if the present budget is accepted. From a total of Rs. 13 crores and odd the revenue receipts have gone up to nearly Rs. 22 crores, while revenue expenses have gone up from Rs. 11 crores and 83 lakhs to Rs. 13,43,00,000. Thereby on revenue account alone while we started in 1937-38 with a surplus of more than Rs. 1,17,00,000 we shall end with a deficit of nearly Rs. 8½ crores at the close of the coming year. The deficit for the two years 1943-44 and 1944-45 will come up to the staggering amount of nearly 20 crores of rupees. The total debts of this province in the year 1937-38 were nil. At the end of 1940-41 also there was no permanent debt or a floating debt to be taken notice of. In 1941-42 however debts amounted to Rs. 1,44,00,000 at the end of the year; in 1942-43 to Rs. 3,95,00,000. The Revised Estimates of 1943-44 show that on the 31st March, 1944, the province will have a total debt at the end of this year amounting to Rs. 45 crores, and it is hoped that with certain readjustments in the course of the next year the debt position at the end of 1944-45 will stand at Rs. 21,62,00,000. The total net uncovered indebtedness will towards the end of this year remain at Rs. 12,78,00,000 and in the end of 1944-45 will reach the enormous figure of Rs. 19,71,00,000. If debt receipts and capital receipts are also accounted for, the position regarding the total surplus or deficit from 1937-38 to 1944-45 reveals that while in the year 1937-38 the net surplus was about Rs. 30,00,000 we shall end 1944-45 with a net deficit of more than Rs. 13 crores in spite of large indebtedness and what is most astounding is that while in the year 1937-38 we had a closing balance of Rs. 1,36,00,000 we shall end 1944-45 with a deficit in the closing balance of Rs. 10,65,00,000.

While this is the position so far as the finance of the Province is concerned, there is hardly any evidence of an attempt at economy or retrenchment in

any department of Government. Certain astounding revelations are made if a comparison is made of certain selected heads of expenses from 1937-38 to 1944-45. General Administration accounted for roughly Rs. 1,30,00,000 in 1937-38; it has gone up to Rs. 1,76 lakhs in 1944-45. Jails and Convicts Settlements had only Rs. 41 lakhs provided in 1937-38; in the coming year it will reach the figure of Rs. 1,11,00,000. Police expenditure amounted to Rs. 2,24,00,000 in 1937-38 and this will amount to Rs. 3,02,00,000 in 1944-45. While such is the position in regard to the so-called administrative departments, beneficent nation-building departments fare as follows:—Under Education—General the expenditure incurred in 1937-38 amounted to Rs. 1 crore 26 lakhs, and in 1944-45 it will be Rs. 1,90,00,000. Medical had only Rs. 53 lakhs provided in 1937-38; it will rise to Rs. 63 lakhs in the coming year and Public Health which had only Rs. 30 lakhs provided in 1937-38 will reach the figure of Rs. 61 lakhs in 1944-45 including certain additional provisions for epidemics and special medical arrangements. Agriculture had only a paltry sum of Rs. 11½ lakhs provided in 1937-38; there has been some increased provision and in the coming year a provision of Rs. 1,30,00,000 has been provided under Agriculture out of which Rs. 50 lakhs is meant to go for "Grow More Food" campaign. Civil Works had Rs. 1,20,00,000 provided in 1937-38; it will go down to only Rs. 87 lakhs in 1944-45. Of the three major heads which have been mentioned by the Hon'ble Minister as accounting for the largest expenditure in the Province in the coming year, Famine accounts for Rs. 5,65,00,000 during the current year and Rs. 2,61,00,000 in the coming year while Extraordinary Charges in India account for Rs. 7½ lakhs in the current year and more than Rs. 8½ crores in the next. I will examine the implications of each of these expenses specifically later on when we will deal with the heads in due course.

In regard to interest payments in 1937-38 the Province had a credit balance of payment because of certain adjustments made and there was Rs. 7,44,000 received on that account while the budget for 1944-45 provides for a payment of Rs. 58 lakhs and more on interests alone. But the most important and interesting revelation is when we come to the item of Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries. Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries accounted for Rs. 4,19,000 only in the year 1937-38 including a short period of Executive Councillors, in 1940-41 the amount required was Rs. 4,82,000, in 1941-42 it was Rs. 4,71,000. It dropped down to Rs. 3,97,000 only in 1942-43, but, Sir, ever since the present Ministry came into office it has jumped up to Rs. 6,78,000 in 1943-44 which is the current year and it is proposed to go still higher up to Rs. 7,29,000 in the coming year.

"District Administration—General Establishment" accounted for Rs. 77 lakhs only in 1937-38 and it has gone up to nearly Rs. 96 lakhs in 1944-45.

(At this stage the blue light was lit.)

Sir, I shall require at least half an hour. You gave that much time to Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi and if I am not given the same amount of time I shall not continue. I am the only speaker to speak from these benches.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Siddiqi continued only for 22 or 23 minutes. However, you go on and let us see.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, while this has been the position with regard to expenses on "Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries", grants for medical purposes remain practically stationary from Rs. 2 lakhs 58 thousand in 1937-38 to Rs. 2,83 thousand in 1944-45, and Medical College and Schools from Rs. 10,20 thousand in 1937-38 to Rs. 10,46 thousand in 1944-45. We have heard so much about the necessity of medical relief and for the training of medical men in the province. Here is some evidence of the manner in which these problems are being tackled. Grants for Public Health have gone up from Rs. 18,05 thousands in 1937-38 to Rs. 22,24 thousands in 1944-45. That has been the story of practically all nation-building departments. While nation-building departments have been thus treated the Minister in charge in a most unashamed manner suggests that the Government would be prepared to undertake a loss on trading operations alone of more than 3½ crores in the current year and of Rs. 5 crores in the coming year. Government has failed even then to devise proper rehabilitation schemes and this remains as yet another great item for emergent expenses in the coming year. The Hon'ble Minister has very cleverly mentioned the same and it is not unlikely that towards the end of next year we shall again be faced with a big programme of expenses and a supplementary budget covering crores of rupees in the name of rehabilitation will be presented. Yet, Sir, we do not know whether Government have applied their mind at all to many beneficent schemes for rehabilitation that have been under examination for some time past and whether they have applied their mind to expert suggestions from committees like the Nutrition Committee of Bengal and other similar committees in regard thereto.

There is at least one item in connection with the rehabilitation work which I would invite the attention of Government to, viz., the possibility of production of synthetic vitamin in this province from water-hyacinth. A renowned scientist of this province has, I understand, invented proper machinery for extracting vitamin from water-hyacinth and has demonstrated in the laboratory great possibilities for the same. I understand that the Government of Bengal and the Government of India were both approached in that connection but no help has been forthcoming to assist in the manufacture of vitamins for the relief of the people. We do not know what we shall do with a nation of beggars and destitutes and debilitated people! If rehabilitation schemes are not properly pursued nobody knows what will happen in the coming year.

We sympathise with the Minister in charge of Finance in his agonies to balance the budget and we appreciate his frank admission of defeat in an unabashed exhibition of a negative closing balance of Rs. 10,65 lakhs. This is bankruptcy unmasked. But it may prove the ultimate lever to have the financial relations between the Centre and the province revised. The loss to the province through the supersession of the Niemeyer arrangement and the delinking of the railways from the scheme of participaton of Bengal in the surplus receipts from income-tax and railways combined, at a time when additional and unprecedented burdens were thrown on this province due mainly to conditions created by war, has been colossal and with a modest calculation this is estimated by me at more than 10 crores in the two years 1943-44 and 1944-45. By creating an impossible situation and a possible

deadlock after 1944-45 the attention must perforce be directed to the revision of the present arrangement.

Sir, our disappointment with the present Ministry is not merely with regard to the figures revealed in the budget estimate but also in regard to the general policy pursued by them. When this Government came into office in the latter part of April 1943 certain assurances were held out on behalf of the Government not only by the Chief Whip of the Government but also by the Hon'ble Chief Minister. These assurances gave some idea to the province of what they proposed to do in respect to what they then thought there would be an opposition in the Legislature. I have with me a draft which was passed on to us at the time purporting to lay down some of the major policies that Government were prepared to follow. I will not go through the whole of it, but I can tell you definitely that of the various proposals then made promises were held out for dealing with the food situation very effectively, for meeting the question of civil liberties liberally, for establishing communal harmony, and for making various investigations into allegations of official atrocities at Midnapore, Dacca and in regard to the imposition and realisation of collective fines. I submit that so far as this party is concerned, our approach to the questions has always been on their merits. With regard to this Ministry we have tried to keep ourselves absolutely on the same level as we did with regard to the previous Ministry or the Ministries in the past. We were not moved by persons or personalities and while we deprecated in no uncertain terms the manner in which the Governor of this Province tried to convert a majority into a minority and had put his puppets into power we made it clear at that time that we are not concerned with any particular office or any person holding that office. Yet, Sir, our disappointment in regard to these promises has been most colossal. I would request the Hon'ble Chief Minister, if he was here, to see that at least promises which were supposed to go from him were kept as promises from gentlemen. So far as the reputation of Sir Nazimuddin is concerned let it not be said that even he has been in the habit of holding out false promises.

There is one other thing to which I would like to refer in this connection and that is with regard to the resentment, the deep sense of resentment, that this Province feels over the appointment of an Australian public man as the Governor of this Province.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: We have given notice of a special motion——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order. You are not entitled to refer to that.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Under which rule?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is my view. I cannot allow any discussion on that.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I submit to your ruling that I shall not be allowed here to criticise the personal qualifications of Mr. Casey, the present Governor of Bengal, but Sir, at the same time I submit that we

are entitled in this House to voice the opinion of the Province as a whole about the utter callousness shown to public opinion in the appointment of an Australian——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order. The House stands adjourned for 15 minutes for prayer.

(At this stage the House was adjourned for 15 minutes.)

(After adjournment.)

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I must begin my observations by expressing my deep commiseration for the Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra Goswami that he should have been the instrument—I hope, an unwilling instrument—for presenting before his people the blackest budget in the history of this unhappy Province. Deficits have not been unknown in the past: in fact, the iniquitous Meston Award had made it impossible for successive Finance Members under the Montagu Constitution to balance their budgets year after year in the years of depression which came in the wake of the last war. I remember only too well how a Government verging on bankruptcy was in the habit of administering rebukes to the Corporation of Calcutta for their nation-building activities in the domain of education and medical relief without, however, contributing a farthing to its coffers. But even in the worst days of depression it had never been the lot of this Province to be brought face to face with such an appalling financial situation. It has remained to the credit of the present Finance Minister to disclose through his dark and dismal budget an abysmal deficit for which there has been no parallel in the history of this Province.

Analysing this deficit in his speech, the Finance Minister has admitted that the procurement operations of the Civil Supplies Department will entail a loss of 5 crores of the tax-payers' money. Besides this terrific loss there is the unknown and incalculable loss in the shape of shortages, damaged stocks and unsaleable stocks, the magnitude of which, we are told, will be disclosed at a future date. The present calculated loss of 5 crores will be the inevitable result of purchasing at higher prices and selling at lower, which the Hon'ble the Finance Minister characterises as deliberate depreciation. While saddling the Province with this terrible burden, he seeks to soothe his conscience with the hope that by virtue of this outlay savings will be made possible in countless homes if—and it is a very big "if"—Government operations ensure that the price of rice does not rise above the price now prevailing.

Deliberate depreciation of stocks, shortages, damaged stocks and unsaleable stocks resulting in a huge and immeasurable loss—these are admittedly the inevitable consequences of the procurement operations of this Government. Could a severer condemnation be uttered by the Government themselves of the pivotal plan of their own food policy? Government have staked their all on this procurement plan: they have declared in unequivocal terms that they will stand or fall on its success or failure. Surely they did not imply by such a declaration that the Province must give them a blank cheque for their dealings in foodgrains. Has the Hon'ble the Finance Minister cared to explain why Government could not devise the necessary

means and methods which would enable them to purchase at low prices in favourable markets, particularly when Nature has been so bountiful this year in her gifts to this province? Have we not been told in the brilliant Press Notes of the Government of Bengal that were issued from time to time to lead or mislead the people of Bengal, that purchases will be made by Government at very low prices? The Finance Minister wants the tax-payer not to look askance at a loss of 5 crores if the price of rice does not rise higher than what it is now. But even if that hope is ultimately realised, it will afford no execuse for the failure of Government to avoid this enormous loss in its procurement operations in addition to the unascertained future loss in the shape of loss and damage to the accumulated stocks. What a fine commentary on their much-vaunted procurement and distribution plan!

Sir, the Finance Minister invites the tax-payer to excuse this colossal loss in the expectation that the price of rice will not rise above the price now prevailing. Is that the ideal which Government have set before themselves? Is it the aim of their food plan to stablise the price of rice at its present level? What is that level? The published figures of the Government in the *Calcutta Gazette* indicate that rice is selling at Rs. 16 to Rs. 18 per maund in most of the districts in Bengal and in some places rice can scarcely be had in open market at the controlled price? I have quoted the very words used by the Director of Agriculture. Is that the price level that Government seeks to maintain by incurring the financial loss which the tax-payer has been asked to swallow in place of rice? Government must remember that rice selling at Rs. 18 per maund is more than three times the price which the people of this province can afford to pay.

Then, again, Sir, are the Government quite so sure that the price is not mounting up in various places and that those dark and ominous symptoms have not again made their appearance even in this month of February which only a few months ago blackened the atmosphere of this Province with starvation, pestilence and death? I am no alarmist, no pessimist, certainly not a defeatist, with apologies to the Food Secretary of the Central Government. He is assuring us from his place in New Delhi that the bitterness of our experience in this Province at the present moment is nothing but misconceived sweetness and that our growing fears for the future based on the present trend of prices are but the vague outlines of an empty dream. Let us only hope that he may prove a true prophet. Let us only pray that the political window-dressing of this Ministry may not once again conceal behind it the dry and dead bones of human skeletons.

Sir, coming now to the question of distribution, the Finance Minister has done well in paying a well-deserved tribute to Lord Wavell and to the Army. The Hon'ble Minister has declared that the Viceroy's decision was at once realistic and statesmanlike, and, what is more, it marked the turning point in our troubles. May I ask the Hon'ble Minister in all humility why this turning point could not be reached earlier when people were dying in their thousands? There was the Government of India and there was a Viceroy even before the arrival of Lord Wavell on the scene to take realistic and statesmanlike decisions and there was also an equally efficient Army to give effect to such decisions. Did the Bengal Ministry before the arrival of Lord Wavell approach the Government of India to lend them an effective

hand in their distribution plan? If so, what was the reply? Did the *Government of India refuse to respond or was it that the Bengal Ministry* failed in their duty in placing their requirements before the Central Government? It would be interesting to learn what efforts were made in that direction by the Bengal Ministry before the arrival of the present Viceroy when the death-roll from starvation was mounting up from day to day all over the Province. The Ministry has stood condemned at the bar of world opinion for their appalling inability and inefficiency in preventing mass starvation and death. They have dragged down the fair name of the people of this province by supplying to reactionary opponents of India's political emancipation formidable material for their unholy propaganda. Let the Bengal Ministry furnish before the world unanswerable proof that in spite of their best efforts no serious steps could have been taken by them before the assumption of his high office by the present Viceroy. Let them show that the responsibility lay on other shoulders which refused to respond to their cry for help on behalf of this distressed Province. In any such efforts to vindicate provincial autonomy in Bengal, they may be assured of our wholehearted support from the point of view of the larger Indian autonomy. In the absence of any such evidence, the success of the Viceroy and the Army cannot to any extent absolve the Ministry from the consequences of their tragic and culpable failure.

Sir, some provision has been made for additional medical relief to fight pestilence coming as the aftermath of famine and starvation. The number of beds which are said to have been provided cannot, however, in any sense be considered to be adequate to the requirements of the situation quite apart from the fact that this provision has been made far too late in the day.

Sir, coming to the provision for increased production of food, we are told that the main aim of the campaign will be to increase the output of lands already cultivated while every attempt will be made to bring under cultivation more cultivable waste lands. In this connection it is disappointing to find that no provision appears to have been made for increased irrigation besides the provision of Rs. 65,000 for Persian Wheels for the entire Province. I do not know if this sum is considered adequate to serve the purpose of irrigation in a province-wide "Grow More Food" campaign. I shall be happy to discover that my apprehensions are unfounded and that more provision has been made for productive irrigation in the real sense of the expression, namely, irrigation productive of food in this famine-stricken Province.

Sir, I do not propose to make any elaborate reference to the demand under "General Administration", but two outstanding questions still remain unanswered. When may I ask, will the members of this Legislature including my revered Leader, Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose, be released from detention? Times have changed, disturbances have subsided and there cannot remain the remotest excuse for their further continued detention.

In the matter of family allowance to the detenus, there may have been some increase in some cases, but paltry, insignificant and insulting family allowances amounting in some cases to Rs. 10 or Rs. 15 per month are still not unknown to the Bengal Ministry. Such humiliating scales of family allowances are neither honourable to the Government nor useful to the families concerned. May I, Sir, put in a word—a strong and vigorous word

so far as it lies in my power—for the release of the large number of detenus who are still clapped behind the prison bars. It has never been established in any court of law that they were in any way responsible for any of the happenings to which Government have taken exception and even whatever arguments might be put forward in support of such detention in times past, well, no such arguments can possibly hold good today.

Sir, may I in this connection also draw the attention of the Finance Minister to another appalling state of affairs in that stricken district of Midnapore. We are told that as much as Rs. 17 lakhs by way of agricultural loans is sought to be realised by the present Government from those people who have been stricken down by famine, by pestilence, by flood and by starvation. In their search for more money to placate the Government of India, they have at last pounced upon these helpless and utterly miserable people of Midnapore. May I, Sir, in all humility ask my honourable friend what steps he is going to take in order that no oppression or hardship can be caused to these people?

Sir, I refuse to take any notice of the vituperations of Mr. Siddiqi. My honourable friend Mr. Atul Chandra Sen has in a few well-chosen words placed the view-point of our party apparently with telling effect, and we can afford to ignore the stale fulminations of Mr. Siddiqi regarding our party.

Sir, I do not desire to prolong my observations on this occasion. The present Ministry has now functioned for about a year. The balance-sheet they have presented before this House is a balance-sheet of famine, starvation, death, pestilence and bankruptcy of the worst order that will remain to the eternal shame of this Ministry.

Mr. SYED BADRUDDOJA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have gone through the Financial Statement for 1944-45 presented by the Hon'ble Finance Minister very carefully not once, not twice, but over and over again. It makes a very interesting reading. Sir, he has clothed dry details—arithmetical details—with flesh and blood and made them instinct with life. Possibly this statement might befit a poet conjuring up the dream of an indefinite future or a philosopher pondering over the shifting phases of the world's existence, but not a Finance Minister certainly who has got to husband the resources of the Province in the difficult times through which we are passing. Restrained Parliamentary language, dignified expressions, interspersed here and there with gems culled from treasures of antiquity might lend this statement a fascination and charm all its own, but it hardly convinces the public that this huge deficit with which Bengal is faced at the present moment is due simply because of certain conditions created by the war. My esteemed friend Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi in his characteristic fashion while trying to defend this Government for all the misdeeds of the past few months, for all its sins of omission and commission, has come forward with the oft-repeated plea that the old Government, I mean the previous Coalition Government of Mr. Fazlul Huq, was responsible for creating a desperate food crisis which led to the recent disaster in Bengal. This statement, Sir, has been categorically denied, refuted and contradicted in no uncertain terms by various speakers in this House and outside. Sir, even the Government of India had to agree to the contention of the then Government of Bengal, that there was a shortage of

foodstuffs. Mr. Fazlul Huq made a statement on the floor of this House *in March 1943 that there was a shortage of foodstuffs in Bengal and even* Major-General Wood declared by quoting facts that there was a shortage of food in Bengal. Yet, Sir, in a spirit of complacency the present Ministry immediately after assumption of office had the temerity, had the cheek, had the lack of any sense of responsibily to declare that there was no deficit in Bengal and the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy was the first to make that declaration. It was followed up by the statement of Sir Azizul Haque who occupied the honoured position of Food Member of the Government of India. On the 13th of May he made a statement that there was no shortage of foodstuffs in Bengal and that "psychological factors were amongst the main causes for shortage of essential foodstuffs and rise in prices". Sir Azizul made a statement again on the 15th May that there was nothing to doubt the accuracy of the figures that had been published by the Government and that there was no shortage of foodstuffs, there was no scarcity, there was no deficit in Bengal. Naturally the neighbouring provinces, which were hitherto giving some supplies to the Government of Bengal in view of the acutest crisis through which Bengal was passing, grew suspicious, nervous and hesitant about the policy of this Government, apart from the shady transactions and ugly rumours about corruption and bribery which had marked the administration of this province for the last 11 or 12 months specially in the matter of procurement and distribution of foodgrains and in the matter of appointment of monopolists. The very misleading, baseless and incorrect statements made by responsible officers and persons in position and authority had created the impression in the public mind that the old Government was responsible. But they have misquoted the statement of Mr. Fazlul Huq. Mr. Fazlul Huq said in December, 1942, that Bengal could go on in view of the prospects of a good crop in the coming year and needed some wheat only provided of course all exports from Bengal were stopped. But immediately after that export was not stopped. Reckless military purchases, reckless purchases by Port Trusts, industrial concerns, Government and private agents brought about the desperate condition, which caused the death of millions of our countrymen. Sir, Mr. Amery in the House of Commons declares that only one million deaths have occurred. If there were even half a dozen deaths in England due to starvation, or devitalization the British people would have provoked a first class crisis and demanded the head of Mr. Amery on a charger and razed the British Government to the dust. But this barbarous thing is possible in this barbarous system of administration that prevails in this land! Our mothers and sisters have appeared naked in tattered clothes, clothes not sufficient to cover or hide their shame. For lack of medicines, for lack of proper nourishment, for lack of foodstuffs the children of the soil have died not in hundreds, not in thousands, not in lakhs but in millions, and yet one not quite conversant with the affairs of the province, either ill-informed or misinformed or not properly informed states in the House of Commons that not more than one million deaths have occurred. My friends of the Muslim League persuasion recently came to office to save Muslim Bengal by establishing Pakisthan in the Eastern Region. But instead of Pakisthan our province is being converted into a veritable *gorosthan*. (Cries of "Hear, hear" from the Opposition benches). I would not have referred to these

things, but my friend Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi in his characteristic fashion has declared that we Muslims are in the pockets of Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee. (Babu NARENDRA NARAYAN CHAKRABARTY: Quite right.) Sir, I submit to the members on the other side that we are not in his pockets but by their ill digested policy and programme and the thoughtless measures that they have taken they have put millions of Muslims already on the verge of starvation in the hands of Dr. Shyamaprasad Mookerjee for help and succour. (Cries of "Hear, hear" from Opposition benches.) It is not we who are in the hands of Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee but by your own policy you have driven Muslims to a state of desperation, by raising the false cry of "Islam in danger" you have roused Muslim passions to an uncontrolled frenzy of despair. One fine morning by an ugly conspiracy behind the scene you pitchforked yourselves into a position of trust which you are unworthy to hold and you have already landed the country into disaster. Similar famines occurred in 1866. The same reckless policy, the same indiscriminate purchases, the same mishandling, the same bungling, the same dishonest collusion with vested interests. In spite however of definite warnings from responsible quarters, in spite of signs on the walls, the then Government disregarded the sound advice given by responsible people with the result that one million souls died for want of any proper shelter, for lack of adequate and regular supply of foodstuffs, but the subsequent Government of 1873 and 1874 under the wise guidance of Lieutenant Governor Sir George Campbell adopted measures in time, arranged for adequate and regular supply of foodstuffs and provided transport facilities for bringing in supplies from various quarters and thus saved the situation. In spite of the fact that two crores of people were in the grip of famine, because of proper arrangements for adequate and regular supply of foodstuffs under the wise guidance of that particular Lieutenant-Governor who was placed in charge of this hapless province, Bengal was saved (Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: As this Government has done.) In spite of the fact that two crores of people were affected by the famine, only a few persons perished.

Sir, if it were due to the visitations of nature, if it were due to natural calamities, if it were due to floods, typhoons and cyclones that overtook 24-Parganas and Midnapore we would have submitted to it as a providential dispensation. But bribery, corruption, bungling, mishandling, dirt, filth, abomination, nepotism and favouritism of a reprehensive character marked the present administration of Bengal. (Uproar.)

Sir, I want to go without interruptions. If you ask me to stop, I will stop. After all, it is a question too serious for such interruptions. But I may assert that I am not going to be daunted, dominated or cowed down by the interruptions of irresponsible people (A voice from the Coalition benches: A nice speech indeed!) I am glad that it has gone home. (Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Question.) As I have submitted already, it was for this deliberate bungling and shady transactions of this Government during the last 12 months that they have been in office—not through a fair deal, not through constitutional means, but through shady, questionable tactics condemned by all canons of decency that the situation assumed such grave proportions.

Before I enter into a detailed discussion of the budgetary provisions I would first of all refer to the capital head "85—A". As the Finance Minister puts it, this head was opened during the current year for the exhibition of large scale trading transactions undertaken by Government to promote healthier marketing conditions in respect of certain commodities, principally foodgrains. This scheme contemplates purchase of foodgrains other than wheat, purchase of wheat and wheat products, supply of foodstuffs to Government employees at concession rates and purchase of standard cloth, sugar and salt. The total capital outlay involved in these transactions is placed at 76 crores of which 41 crores is derived from sale proceeds and represents the "turnover of stocks". As the Finance Minister puts it, the loss has been placed at 3½ crores. The book value of the stock likely to remain in hand towards the end of the year is estimated at 29¾ crores. The total capital outlay for the year 1944-45 is 81 crores, and a loss of 5 crores and a carry forward of 12 crores of foodgrains other than wheat and some 56 lakhs of salt.

First of all, I would refer to the transactions already carried on by Government during the current year. In a scheme of this nature involving colossal sums of money it is necessary for the Finance Minister to furnish this House with details of the scheme in which such a huge amount has been invested for the purchase of foodgrains, for purchase of wheat and wheat products. Government should have indicated the actual loss and gain out of the entire transactions undertaken by Government including the profit that might have resulted out of the transactions in wheat and wheat products. Besides, nobody knows the actual cost price. This is a point to which I will draw the attention of the honourable members opposite specially. Nobody knows the actual cost price at which the purchasing agents of Government purchased the stocks nor even the specified quantities in each of the areas both inside and outside the Province. Naturally, therefore, the Legislature as also the public are at a loss to determine what would be the actual value of the stocks estimated at Rs. 29¾ crores. Does this represent the market value or the purchase value of the stocks? I would appeal to the House to consider the implications of this question very carefully. Supposing the book value of the stock in hand towards the close of the year represents the actual market value which has fallen in recent months, there is bound to be depreciation in the value. If we are to take the book value as representing the purchase price of the stock then there has already been a considerable depreciation. This has not been shown in the budget figures by the Finance Minister. It might result in an addition of a few crores more to the huge deficit for the year 1944-45. It is rather amazing that in a scheme of this character the Legislature as also the public outside should be kept absolutely in the dark about the details of the transactions. Naturally therefore, without knowing the details we are not prepared to risk another unknown and indefinite venture involving an expenditure of a huge amount of public money.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister refers to this in page 2 of his statement, and says that it will not be possible to calculate the final result of these operations until the last stocks are disposed of and the accounts closed. "This provision," according to the Finance Minister, "is not expected to

cover the further losses with which we shall be suddenly faced one day—shortages, damaged stock" like those damages that occurred in the Botanical Gardens, and railway stations in Jessore owing to lack of storage facilities which were offered by many storing agents but which the Government of Bengal in order to pamper a coterie which keeps them in office had neither the courtesy nor the decency to accept. We are very much apprehensive about the results of the operations. Naturally, therefore, we should be all the more nervous, all the more hesitant to vote for the provisions in the budget without a real idea of the actual details.

I will now refer to "63—Extraordinary Charges". Extraordinary charges, needed perhaps for extraordinary remedies in the extraordinary situation created in this land. Rs. 26 lakhs has been provided in the revised estimate for 1943-44 on account of establishment charges regarding the scheme for rationing and Rs. 42 lakhs on account of further expansion and reorganisation of the Department of Civil Supplies. The cost of the Civil Supplies Department during 1942-43, only amounted to Rs. 4 lakhs though the organisation of Civil Supplies was laid on a solid basis. But it has jumped up to Rs. 1 crore and Rs. 1 crore 48 lakhs in 1943-44 and 1944-45 respectively. These figures do not of course include the losses on the trading transactions of the department which have been fixed at Rs. 3½ and 5 crores respectively. About the Civil Supplies Department there are rumours of a very reprehensible and ugly character regarding prevalence of bribery and corruption. Instead of the Department being called "the Civil Supplies Department", it had better be named as "the Appointment-Supplies Department". Its justification lies in the creation of appointments and absorption of a thousand and one hangers-on on Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries. Efficient members of the Indian Civil Service and members of the Provincial Civil Service have been drafted to this department much to the detriment of the efficiency of administration in the districts of Bengal. Are thousands of appointments justified by the financial crisis through which we are passing? These appointments are not for the needs and requirements of the people but certainly for the continuance in office of the present Ministry at any cost.

I shall now refer to those instances which have come to my notice. I have known it from a very reliable authority that bags of sugar were supplied to one Mr. Abdul Jabbar Wahedi, a protege and hireling of Mr. Suhrawardy, Secretary of the Calcutta Muslim League Food Committee for distribution among hotels and restaurants in Calcutta. But 13 bags were supplied by Mr. A. Wahedi to Mr. A. K. Majibi, proprietor of Gaya Tailoring House, 16, Zakaria Street, who, in his turn, sold the 13 bags of sugar to Kohinoor Biscuit Company and one A.R.P. Warden arrested the buffalo cart No. 841Z at the gate of Kohinoor Biscuit Factory, 35, Chatawalla Gully on 24th November, 1943, with the help of constables No. H2 named Raghunandan Pandey of Bow Bazar Police station where 13 bags of sugar were deposited. A complaint was lodged at the Bowbazar police-station. But it is unfortunate that a high police official under the protecting wings of the present Government one fine morning hushed up the whole thing and released the 13 bags of sugar without any enquiry.

I would in this connection refer to some appointments made in the Civil Supplies Department.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would appeal to you to finish your speech quickly. My difficulty is this. There are other leaders who want to speak and in their case also I may have to relax the time limit. It is impossible for me to do so because in that case we will have to sit for a long time. I am sorry I cannot give you more than one minute.

Mr. SYED BADRUDDOJA: I want 5 minutes more, Sir. One unfortunate candidate from Birbhum had the folly to come to me for a recommendation for an appointment in the Civil Supplies Department. At the interview he was selected and as soon as the recommendation letter which I had given was discovered he had to go though he was a graduate and an accomplished young man. He was no friend of mine, no constituent, no brother, no relation and yet when it was discovered that he took a letter of recommendation from me he was at once sent away. Naturally therefore we are not in a position to look with any favour at the huge provisions made for the reorganisation of the Civil Supplies Department. We do not know why a huge sum of 42 lakhs has been provided for further expansion and reorganisation of the Department of Civil Supplies and Rs. 26 lakhs for establishment charges on account of the scheme for rationing. The Government of Bengal have already reduced the percentage of dealers from 55 to 22 in disregard of the Government of India's decision and placed the running of Government shops in charge of those inefficient and inexperienced hands whose only claim is that they are somehow directly or indirectly connected with the Minister——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your time is up. I have already given you the time you wanted——

Mr. SYED BADRUDDOJA: Sir, I want another five minutes.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have already given you time but if you go on asking for more and more time it would be impossible for me to carry on the debate.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Sir, he is the only speaker from my party. People in this House have often talked on irrelevant matters, but my friend is making serious allegations giving detailed facts and figures which supply materials for a thorough public enquiry. I hope you will not stifle his speech by denying him time. Let him have five minutes more.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have already given him ample time and I will give him two minutes more and I hope he will conclude his speech by that time.

Mr. SYED BADRUDDOJA: Thank you, Sir.

Sir, I will not refer to any more figures. My esteemed friend, the Hon'ble the Finance Minister, has asked us to look back. Sir, we look backwards. "We look before and after and pine for what is not; our sincerest laughter with some pain is fraught: Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thoughts". I refer to the tragic events that took place a few months back. Sir, it is said Heaven helps those who help themselves. We want to help ourselves provided Heaven's purpose is not frustrated by human machinations. Sir, the present Ministry since it came into power has been trying to help itself but it does not care whether Heaven's purpose is frustrated by their unusual greed, by the lure for self-aggrandizement

and by the unnatural desire for personal domination at the cost of the Province which brought about the terrible catastrophe a few months ago. May I with folded hands appeal through you, Sir, to honourable members opposite to rise equal to the occasion, to rise to the gravity of the situation. Sir, we are not going to tolerate the autocracy of this Ministry any longer. Today, fortunately for us, there is reaction everywhere, not only in Noakhali, not only in Calcutta but throughout India, against the domination of the autocrat. The domination of the self-deluded Czar of Muslim India is going to be razed to the ground in no time. Sir, empires have broken to pieces, empires have very often crumbled to the dust by virtue of one man's autocracy or personal domination. It is time that the Mussalmans of India did asert themselves in the name of the Prophet and in the name of Almighty God and not allowed themselves to be duped by the political jugglery so rampant in the country for mere personal aggrandisement of a band of self-seekers—(Loud cries from the Coalition benches and counter cries from the Opposition). Sir, we have been dubbed as traitors, but I must tell you, Sir, we are not traitors to the cause of Islam; we are not traitors to the noblest ideals of Islam; we are not traitors to the Mussalmans of this land, we are not traitors to God and His Prophet—(Loud noise from the Coalition benches in which the voice of the member was drowned). On the other hand, Sir, we know who are traitors to the cause of Islam; we know who are traitors to the country; and we also know how to tear off the veil of conspiracy to pieces. Sir, the mills of God grind slowly but they grind exceedingly small sooner perhaps than our friends opposite can conceive of and the shady transactions of the traitors of the land will come to light, and they will topple down never to rise again from the grave in which they will lie buried for ever. (Loud applause from the Opposition benches.)

Mr. M. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I will not take much time of this House because of the fact that the bankruptcy of administration is so manifest in the so-called Budget statement of the Hon'ble the Finance Minister that it does not require a detailed scrutiny—(Cries of "Ha! Ha!" from the Coalition benches)—I must tell you that this "ha! ha!" will not do; the fact is there Not only financial bankruptcy is manifest in the budget, but bankruptcy of honesty and bankruptcy of statesmanship is fully manifest. To begin with, I shall quote one line from the Finance Minister's statement which is itself a quotation, namely, that taxation is an engine of social economy. The Hon'ble the Finance Minister is laughing, Sir. Well, I would ask him to go back to his own place and administer his own estate instead of coming here and administering the province of Bengal's finance,—a person who is bankrupt in every respect is now there in charge of the finance of this great province. It is known to you, Sir, that beginning from the Chief Minister down to the last they are all wards under the Court of Wards so far as the *zamindar* Ministers are concerned. Sir, the late Governor of Bengal is dead and I will not say anything against him. But I cannot help mentioning that it was he who put those puppet Ministers there and the result of that was the calamity that befell us a few months ago. They will remain there so long as the Governor allows them to be there or until we drive them out. The time

is fast approaching when Bengal will not tolerate all the nonsense on their part. Forty lakhs of our people have died of starvation and the present Ministry has tried to foist the whole blame on the shoulders of the Fazlul Huq Ministry in which I also had the honour of holding a seat. Sir, this blaming each other will not do. The Government of the day must be held responsible for their failure to tackle the famine problem properly. Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi said a few months ago that those unfortunate people who died of starvation in the regime of the benign Government of the Muslim League Ministry will go to heaven. If that is the idea of men like Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi and other supporters of the Government, I do not know what I should say about them. It is a shame that we in this House are treated like children and little boys in this fashion by prominent members of the Government party. You say that yours is a Muslim League Government looking after the interests of the Muslims, and you decry Mr. Fazlul Huq because with him is Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee who will come and devour you if they are in power. You have said that Mr. Fazlul Huq is in the pocket of that much-maligned gentleman, Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee. But you must not forget that if Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee had not organized the last famine relief I do not know how many more would have died of starvation in Bengal——(Cries of "Ha! Ha!" from the Coalition parties again)——I know you will simply cry out, "ha! ha!", but this cry of "ha! ha!" will one day teach you a good lesson.

Sir, this budget stands self-condemned. Many of my friends on this side of the House have criticised the budget. Dr. Sanyal has criticised it from top to bottom. We know what a great calamity befell us last year and we do not know what is going to happen this year, but we all earnestly pray that the great calamity that befell us last year is averted this year. A new Governor has come and I hope he will make matters right and will not play into the hands of the present Ministry which has brought about our ruin. We have now a soldier Governor and the threatre of war has changed its place from the West to the eastern gates of India. Now at this time when the Japanese are knocking at the eastern gates of India it is only right and proper that the Governor will take courage in both hands and will so create an atmosphere which will not only accelerate war efforts but also save the people of Bengal from starvation and death as did happen last year during the regime of the present Government. I am of opinion that the sooner this Ministry goes out of office the better for all concerned.

Mr. DAVID HENDRY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, from these benches last week Mr. Gladding has already given our views with regard to the general financial position and I propose tonight to deal only with a few general questions of policy. Before doing so, however, I should like to reiterate very strongly, as strongly as I can, our view that Bengal has an indisputable right to outright financial assistance from the Central Government of India and that steps be taken immediately to press home that point of view. An early settlement is essential since the welfare of Bengal for many years to come is at stake and continued uncertainty must have the worst possible effect upon the economy of this province. That Bengal should be asked to bear alone the difficulties and financial burdens imposed

upon her by the war as a frontier province while the sheltered provinces not only do not suffer but actually enjoy, to use the words of a Provincial Chief Minister which I saw quoted today, "unparalleled prosperity", is so obviously unjust that the picture should be put in its proper perspective as early as possible.

Bengal is probably not popular with the Finance Department of the Government of India and in my experience she is certainly not popular with other provinces. It might be uncharitable to suggest that this unpopularity is due to the fact that she needs help but this is probably so and every advantage is taken outside this province to make the most of the internecine political warfare for which this Province is so unfortunately well-known and to use this as an argument that Bengal has only herself to blame for her present troubles and is therefore no more entitled to help from outside than other provinces. This, Sir, we know to be an exaggeration of the facts but it should be an warning to us that loud exploitation of political differences in and out of the Legislature reacts to the grave disadvantage of this Province and I would once again appeal for a truce to the political squabbling which has already done so much harm to Bengal.

Sir, there are two outstanding questions which demand our immediate attention more than any other. Firstly, measures to prevent a recurrence of the calamity which visited the Province in 1943, and secondly, the problem of reconstruction and rehabilitation which follows in the wake of that calamity. Whether the famine of 1943 was preventible or not will always be open to argument. Wisdom after the event may show that it was preventible but taking all the circumstances into consideration, physical and psychological, we have already given our view that it was not preventible and was due to a pressure of events which no Government could control. More foresight might and should have been exercised by the administration, both in the previous Government and in this Government, but foresight alone could not have prevented famine conditions arising although it probably would have mitigated its worst effects. Be that as it may, Sir, there can be no doubt that a recurrence of the calamity is preventible and that it is the responsibility of this Government and the administration to prevent such a recurrence. It is a heavy responsibility but a responsibility which this Government must accept.

We start off 1944 with certain very tangible advantages; there is a bumper rice crop; there is the undertaking of the Government of India to supply foodgrains sufficient to feed Greater Calcutta on a rationed basis; there is a rationing scheme now in operation in Calcutta and working much more successfully than most people expected; and, finally, there is in existence a clear cut and definite food plan, the policy of which has been agreed between the Government of Bengal and the Government of India. That food plan follows generally the lines recommended by the Foodgrains Policy Committee (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: No.) and although there has been much criticism of the appointment of procurement Chief Agents, four in number, there is no doubt that it was a necessary step and in keeping with the recommendations of the Foodgrains Policy Committee itself. If Government is to ensure control over procurement operations we do not see what other method could be adopted, for Government

must have agents whom it can hold responsible for the success of procurement operations; and to leave procurement entirely in the hands of uncoordinated trade interests would have been a serious dereliction of duty on the part of any Government. The Chief Agents however should and must work to the greatest possible extent through the normal trade channels and I hope every effort will be made to see that this is done. Furthermore, having made these appointments Government must see that the agents are carrying out their work efficiently. If any of them fail to do what is expected of them, adjustments must be made and made quickly before it is too late to retrieve lost opportunities. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Then give it to a European member.) If Dr. Sanyal makes such a suggestion Sir, it is not for me to deny it.

What I should like to stress now, however, is that the stage for criticism or argument is over and that what is essential now is public co-operation with the Food Plan for the general good. Public confidence has been badly shaken and it will need the efforts of everyone to restore that confidence which is the first step in the return to normal conditions. There are persistent reports that even now efforts are being made in some quarters to sabotage the Food Plan by inciting cultivators not to sell their paddy below the ceiling prices fixed by Government and even not to sell paddy at all to Government agents. If there are such politicians who, in the words of the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies, value a political point more than the lives of the people—and I for one should be sorry to believe that there are such—then we cannot find words to condemn them too strongly. We have all got a heavy responsibility in these critical times—the Opposition as well as the Government. The Opposition must indeed ventilate public grievances and criticise where they believe criticism is justified but with the welfare of the people of this Province at stake co-operation with the Government Food Plan has become a vital necessity and comes first if we are not again to find ourselves in the throes of another famine.

Although there are many favourable factors now which were not in existence last year, over-confidence or complacency is certainly not justified but it is essential above all to avoid defeatism, talking and agitating ourselves into a second famine. The advantages with which we enter 1944 should be solid enough in themselves to be a guarantee against the recurrence of famine but as the Viceroy has rightly emphasized, the problem is now mainly administrative, and I am by no means certain that the necessary administrative machinery is yet good enough to place beyond all possible doubt the success of the Government Food Plan on which so much depends. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Employ more officers.) The Department of Civil Supplies has been re-organised and expanded and a beginning has been made in setting up a district administration composed of Regional Deputy Directors of Civil Supplies with an inspectorate. This however can only be a beginning. I do not myself see how such a small district organisation can cope with the manifold duties of supervising the procurement and distribution operations; of enforcing the Foodgrains Control Order; of enforcement of price control; of controlling the rice mills; of control of import and export permits, etc., etc. My first point therefore, is, as Dr. Sanyal has already suggested, that staff should be expanded (Laughter).

(Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: And the selection must be made by the Parliamentary Secretary.) (Nawabzada K. NASARULLAH: Yes.) I am glad that Dr. Sanyal now finds himself in so much agreement on this important point.

Then, Sir, we come to the quality of the staff. The work of food administration calls for very special qualities, particularly the quality of integrity and the ability to accept responsibility. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: And absence of knowledge.) Food officers should be paid in accordance with these qualities and responsibilities for we cannot expect high standards of administration from lowly paid temporary officers who might be tempted to view their appointment as an opportunity of making hay while the sun shines. (Cries of "hear, hear" from Opposition Benches.) We all condemn that. They must have security of tenure and they must be trained. The importance of training in food administration was stressed by the Foodgrains Policy Committee, but so far as I can see nothing has been done here to set up adequate machinery for training in food administration. There should surely be a separate branch of the Civil Supplies Department in charge of training in very much the same way as the Civil Defence Department provides for training of its A.R.P. officers.

In the third place I should like to stress very strongly that in making emergency appointments, whether in the Civil Supplies Department, the Department of Agriculture or Medical and Public Health Department, efficiency must be the primary consideration. It would for example be fatal if through a strict observance of the communal ratio we allow important technical appointments in these departments to be held up because candidates from a particular community were not available. The communal ratio, Sir, I know cannot be abrogated entirely, but I do urge that in the case of technical emergency appointments, and I have in mind particularly the departments I have mentioned above, the communal ratio should not be strictly applied, and appointments should not be delayed because candidates from a particular community are not available. In stressing the necessity for administrative efficiency I recall that the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies admitted recently that there had been temporary breakdown in transport arrangements to the deficit areas This, Sir, in 1944, with the accumulated experience of 1943 behind us is a most serious admission, and I hope that he will be able to tell us how this breakdown occurred and what steps have been taken to see that it will not happen again.

Before leaving the food problem, Sir, there is one unsatisfactory feature to which I should like to refer, and that is the inferior quality of some of the rice imported into this Province. Government, we believe, have made arrangements for inspection and sampling on arrival and, while this is obviously essential, it will not in itself provide a solution of the problem, for it is not practicable to send back to other provinces supplies which are of bad quality. It appears to us essential that inspection should take place at the main despatching centres in the exporting provinces. In the face of opposition from those provinces, Bengal cannot appoint its own inspectors, but, in our opinion, the Government of India has such authority and should be pressed to make itself responsible for the quality of the foodgrains sent into Bengal in accordance with its undertaking.

Coming now to the question of reconstruction and rehabilitation, we can read, as the Hon'ble the Finance Minister has pointed out, the tale of famine, misery and suffering in Bengal in the estimates of expenditure. We can see also in these estimates possibilities of reconstruction and the possibilities of building a better Bengal through increased activity in the nation-building departments. Take first the Department of Agriculture. Expenditure on that long-neglected department has risen from Rs. 68 lakhs in 1942-43 to nearly Rs. 2 crores in the revised estimates for the current year. This is a welcome development, and our keen and energetic Minister of Agriculture is to be congratulated on his work so far; but I would like to stress that we need a more permanent expansion of our Agricultural Service than is evidently visualised. I feel some doubts as to whether this is to be attempted by creating a sort of parallel organisation under an Agricultural Development Commissioner, and I would like to be assured that this is only a temporary organisation which will in due course be absorbed into the permanent Agricultural Service. An efficient Agricultural Service cannot be created without considerable facilities for training, and training facilities as we all know in this Province are still woefully inadequate. The number of trained agricultural officers which can be turned out by the Dacca Agricultural Institute is pitifully small, and I hope the Hon'ble Minister will be able to tell us what steps he has in hand for expanding training facilities for more comprehensive schemes.

Then, taking the Medical and Public Health Services, recent epidemics and their aftermath following upon the famine have clearly shown the incapacity of our existing Public Health and Medical Services to cope with anything in the nature of an emergency or even with actual needs in normal times. It has shown us that the present system of Medical and Public Health Services functioning under the orders of numerous district boards and municipalities with varying standards of efficiency, or no standards at all, is woefully out of date and hampering the growth of a proper medical and health organisation. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Supersede district boards!) (Laughter.) The situation was only saved by Military help, and, as the Hon'ble the Finance Minister has rightly pointed out many people learnt for the first time what real medical attention meant when they went to Military hospitals. We cannot rely on Military help always, and we must know what Government intend to do to put the Medical and Public Services on an efficient basis. The outbreak of disease has provided us with an opportunity for drastic reorganisation and, in our view, Sir, the first step should be to provincialise the Public Health and Medical Services, and I hope that Government will not allow political considerations to interfere with the obvious advantages of this step. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Appoint experts!) Sir, my honourable friend here thinks that I am suggesting appointment of imported experts; I am not. Sometime ago, I passed on to the Hon'ble Shahabuddin the outline of a scheme for the development of medical service in this country by using students not only to increase their own field of knowledge to qualify them better for the degree which they aspired to but also to bring more medical help to the villages. That did not mean importation of any expert from abroad but only the fuller utilisation of the qualities and knowledge of young people who are

already in this country. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The position remains the same for the last seven years.) That has got to be rectified.

Sir, there are many other nation-building activities I should like to deal with, but in view of the time at my disposal these will have to be taken up under the appropriate demands for grants. And lastly, Sir, I should like to say a few words about inflation and the necessity of this Government taking more active steps to bring down existing high prices. We believe that the best contribution which the Provincial Government can make to the problem of counteracting inflation is by reducing the price level of essential commodities. It is we know Government's declared policy to do this, but they have not provided themselves with the necessary enforcement machinery to make their policy effective. Price control is still generally ignored throughout the Province with impunity, and we see no provision in the estimates for a proper price control enforcement organisation. Price control is now a fundamental factor of the all-India food policy, but without enforcement it becomes meaningless. There should be, in our opinion, a separate enforcement branch of the Department of Civil Supplies with an adequate staff. The position is similar with regard to the anti-hoarding and prevention of profiteering ordinance, and, although the issue of this ordinance has undoubtedly had some good effect, there is no enforcement organisation to back it up, and I hope the Minister for Civil Supplies will be able to tell us that he is taking active steps to create such an organisation.

Linked with price control is the necessity for an increased supply of consumers' goods and particularly those required by the cultivator. This has been admitted officially by both the Government of India and the Government of Bengal, but, although many promises have been made of increased supplies, these have so far failed to materialise. Conditions of acute shortage and exorbitant prices therefore continue to prevail everywhere in the Province, and I hope the Minister will tell us what he is doing to improve the situation. I would stress, however, that in any campaign to counteract inflation, the increased supply of consumers' goods is a very essential element indeed.

My third point with regard to inflation is the obvious necessity for the more vigorous recovery of agricultural loans. This, I know, is a very unpopular thing to do but must be faced. During the current year Government have advanced Rs. 2 crores 15 lakhs to cultivators, and I see they expect to recover only Rs. 1 crore in spite of Governmnet's assurance that there would be an intensive drive to recover these loans. The total loans and advances to cultivators and others estimated as outstanding on 1st April, 1944, amount to Rs. 4 crores 96 lakhs, which is a very large sum, and I note that this has not been taken into account in the statement of debts and assets annexed to the Hon'ble the Finance Minister's statement. What are the Government's intentions with regard to the recovery of these loans? I hope the Hon'ble Minister will give us a full and satisfactory answer.

Sir, it must be admitted that no Ministry in Bengal has ever had to take office at a more critical time, nor to face more difficult problems and heavier responsibilities than the present Ministry. All the problems have not been solved, nor are we yet out of the wood—in fact frankly speaking

most of the difficult problems are still with us, but I do feel that the Ministers individually and collectively have not shirked their responsibilities. They have tackled their very difficult problems with energy and determination and have worked well together as a team. They need much co-operation and assistance before the Province can be restored to happier circumstances, but their actions have hitherto, in our opinion, entitled them to the full support and encouragement of this House, and I hope that that will be forthcoming.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, after one year of office the present Ministry has presented a budget which may be described as the crowning achievement of bankruptcy. It is not my intention to take the House through detailed facts and figures in relation to various departments of Government. I propose to confine my remarks mainly to the administration of the Province with regard to the food problem because that, I believe, is the burning problem not only before the House but before the entire Province. My friend, the Leader of the European Group, has spoken just now in a patronizing way about the political squabbles in this Province. It is certainly right and proper that food should not be made the plaything of party politics, but I ask the European Party to remember who made food the plaything of politics this time in 1943. (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: That is forgotten.) The European Party supporting the Ministry then in office found or had to find a pretext in the food situation as it then existed for withdrawing its suport from the Ministry. It was greatly alarmed at the food situation as it stood in February-March, 1943. And in February, 1944, the Leader of the European Group closed his speech by saying that although Bengal had passed through a terrible catastrophe involving the loss of two millions or 3 millions of Bengal's sons and daughters —not one Britisher—but all sons and daughters of Hindus and Muslims of this unfortunate province—it had nothing to say against the Ministry and individually and collectively the Ministry had done all that it could have done. He gets up and says that his party cannot even discover as to whether this Ministry, or for the matter of that, any Ministry could have prevented this catastrophe in 1943. Party squabbles, certainly. But who introduced party squabbles in Bengal's politics in February-March, 1943? (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: The arch politicians.) It was Clive Street which moved from that side to this and those who were then occupying the Opposition Benches were encouraged to give party politics a new role to play in the administration of the Province. There was another unfortunate gentleman presiding over the destinies of the Province who also played an ignoble part in those critical months through which the Province had passed. Thus the new Ministry came into office. It came into office as a result of intrigue, as a result of party squabbles, as a result of the support mainly coming from men of the Clive Street. That was how it started its career. (Cries of "Oh, oh" from the Coalition Benches.) These "Oh, Ohs!" remind me of the zoological gardens and not of the Chamber of the Bengal Legislature. Now what happened in the months after April, 1943? I have got here a summary, which I do not wish to read, of the speeches made by Minister after Minister, individually and collectively saying that everything was all right in Bengal, that there was

no scarcity, that there was no trouble and that there would not be any famine. In that meeting held in the maidan where, knowing the Finance Minister as I do, he could not have felt very comfortable in that company, but he had to say what he did, and he said, within 15 days prices of foodgrains would come down in Bengal. You analyse the speeches. They are not the products of the brains of political conspirators. Those were the responsible statements made by responsible Ministers telling the Province that there was no trouble ahead and that everything would be all right. We on this side of the Opposition protested. The last Ministry, whatever might be said against it, declared from this very House one year ago that there was going to be a serious shortage of foodgrains in Bengal in 1943. If that attitude had been maintained by the new Ministry and if, instead of allowing itself to be soaked in party politics, it had the courage to speak out the truth, if it had appealed to the Government of India to do what was its obvious duty, there would not have been that colossal catastrophe which faced Bengal in 1943. You talk of responsibility! Mr. Amery in the House of Commons talked about provincial autonomy being responsible for the failure of the food situation in Bengal. I know, Sir, that provincial autonomy was not responsible. I know what were the faults of the past Ministry and I know what are the weaknesses of the present Ministry. But in spite of the weaknesses of the present Ministry, I shall state without any fear of contradiction that the ultimate responsibility was of the Viceroy and Governor-General of India who was the Food Member of the Government of India in those days. After the resignation of Mr. Nalini Ranjan Sarker and before Sir Muhammad Azizul Huque took over charge as Food Member it was Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, who appointed himself to be the Food Member of India and before the bar of world opinion will not that estimable gentleman who presided over the destinies of India as Viceroy and Governor-General of India be answerable for his sins of omission and commission? How did he shape the Food policy of India in those stirring times which if properly planned and executed would never have landed Bengal in this disaster? You talk of Lord Wavell coming forward and doing something for this province. You talk about the army coming forward to help the Province of Bengal. Was there not a Viceroy and Governor-General of India before Lord Wavell? What was the Ministry itself doing? What was the Viceroy doing? What was the Government of India doing? My charge against the Bengal Ministry is that not only it connived at the creation of a situation which led to such enormous loss of lives, but it itself miserably failed to do its duty and when it found that the Government of India was not prepared to come to its rescue it had not the courage to throw the office at the face of the Government of India and take its place with the common people of the Province. For the sake of sticking to office it went on sacrificing every interest of the people concerned barring the interest of some party men and the interests of the Clive Street. Now, Sir, what Clive Street have done is they have retained the Ministry in office and they are keeping them in office much to the disgrace of Clive Street and of Bengal. Now, Sir, this deficit has come: of course, there must be a deficit. When the province is faced with such a crisis, it cannot be expected that the province out of its own revenues will be able to meet a situation like this. At the same time

there are two fundamental points on which a practical unanimity has been expressed by many sides in this House to which I would like to refer. In the first place, whatever deficit there is must be met by the Government of India: there can be no compromise on this point. In fact, this is another charge which I would bring against the present Ministry that it allowed itself to be forced into this position that unless the poor people of Bengal are further taxed, help will not come from the Government of India. Why should that be so? The situation today is unparalleled in the history of British rule in India. It is not a disgrace on the Provincial Autonomy: it is a disgrace on British rule itself; it is a disgrace on human civilisation. If that be so, why should not the Government of India be made to pay a few more crores? What does it matter even if it be 10, 15 or 20 crores of rupees, for it will come from that huge printing machinery at its disposal and from papers at its unlimited command? Why, can't you send some more notes to balance the budget of this poor Province of Bengal? On the other hand, you are going on increasing taxation. What does this taxation mean? It means that practically you are tapping all the available resources which may be at your command and which you may require after the war for the purpose of developing the Province on a proper and suitable foundation. Where will you get your money from for that purpose if you go on increasing your taxation now in this way? On the other hand, by the united demand of this House, including the support of the European group even now you can compel the Government of India to come to your help. That is one part.

Sir, the second part is that when there is no control over expenditure, it becomes a matter of great anxiety for the public, because here Government with almost unlimited funds at its disposal, not caring how funds will be supplied, goes on adding not lakhs as we used to see in previous years but adding crores for the so-called relief of the Province. If the Government of the day is a Government which does not enjoy the confidence of the majority of the people of the Province, if the Government is a Government which is apt to utilise its resources for its own party purpose, for political purposes and not actuated by the best of motives, if it is a Government which does not know how to manage its own affairs, then it becomes a matter of great anxiety for the public; and that is exactly what has happened at the present moment.

Now, Sir, I do not wish to discuss the detailed provisions barring to take you only through some departments in order to show how vast sums of money are being spent for establishment, for administration and that they do not go to the real solution of the problems that have to be solved if Bengal is to be saved.

Now, take, Sir, one figure: 54—Famine. Under this head the revised estimate gives us 3,50 lakhs of rupees as gratuity, this 3,50 lakhs of rupees were paid as gratuities for the alleviation of suffering of the people—and 90 lakhs of rupees were spent on establishment. If 3,50 lakhs went for relief, nearly a crore went on establishment—appointments and jobs, for the purpose of keeping this machinery going. What about this year—I mean, the next year?—1,00 lakhs is your estimate for gratuitous relief! Gratuitous relief has been brought down from 3,50 lakhs to 1,00 lakhs, but your

establishment is 1,11 lakhs of rupees. So far as the distribution of jobs is concerned, naturally that must be kept intact, but so far as the starving millions are concerned, the quota must be reduced from their share.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order. I think, Dr. Mookerjee, it would be better if you finish your speech after prayer. The House stands adjourned for 15 minutes.

(The House was accordingly adjourned for 15 minutes.)

(After adjournment.)

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Sir, I was referring to the figures in some of the departments to show how a major portion of the expenditure goes towards maintaining establishment charges, thus reducing the expenditure for actual relief. I gave figures under the head "Famine" —the revised estimates showing an expenditure of 3,50 lakhs on gratuitous relief and about a crore on establishment. For 1944-45, the estimate is 1 crore on gratuitous relief and 1 crore and 11 lakhs on establishment.

Now, take, Sir, the figure under the Department of Agriculture. For "Grow More Food" campaign which has been aptly described by a leading citizen of Bengal as a "grow more officers" campaign, the revised estimates show a total of 1,93 lakhs, and the House will be amazed to know that out of this, 1,37 lakhs of rupees have been spent on posters, propaganda literature, exhibitions and meetings, etc. The budget for the next year shows a provision for 1,30 lakhs of which 50 lakhs of rupees are earmarked for posters and propaganda, etc.

Then take the budget for the Medical Department. Here is an emergency provision of 53 lakhs, but if you take the ordinary budget of 63 lakhs you will find that only 11 lakhs and 30 thousand rupees are spent for medical and surgical goods, diet, treatment, etc., and the rest, nearly 50 lakhs of rupees, on establishment.

There is one figure which does require some explanation—a special provision of 6 lakhs for manure, expenditure on establishment being 3 thousand last year, but it is 70 thousand this year. Whether it is to be spent on experts or manure itself or on Ministers, that is not clear from the budget estimates.

Now, if you turn to another item—a small item no doubt but it requires some explanation—you find a special provision of Rs. 5 lakhs for meeting heavier leave programme outside India—for meeting expenses for allowing officers to go on leave to England. Is it a "Quit India" programme of the Bengal officials (Laughter) or what is it exactly? Why of all years in 1944 when this Province is passing through a terrible crisis should the Bengal Government make a special provision of Rs. 5 lakhs for paying these tried officers coming from the British Isles to go on leave? This is a small amount but still that does require some explanation. If for a moment as a comparison you turn to "Education", you will find here that practically there has been no increase—an increase of a few lakhs of rupees. I know my friends on the other side and on this side and many others are anxious for the Secondary Education Bill. (Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL: Certainly.) What is the object of the Secondary Education Bill—is it the saving of the schools or is it the ending of the schools? The schools are now passing through a terrible crisis. All educational institutions are sad

the entire teching profession is threatened with extinction. Where is the programme of the Ministry as disclosed in the Education budget barring that magnificent sum of Rs. 2,50,000 as grant on secondary schools? Where is the provision for a scheme for expansion—if not for expansion, at least for saving the schools from immediate extinction? That represents the real outlook of the party now in power with regard to educational expansion in this Province.

Now, Sir, there is just one other item and then I shall pass on to other matters. The budget shows Rs. 15 crores as advances for the purchase of foodgrains in the current year. I have not here a copy of the speeches made by Mr. Suhrawardy who has made himself famous by disappearance from the Legislature during the last few days and Mr. Siddiqi who also has disappeared and Mr. Ispahani who also has disappeared, who protested against the allegation of advances made to Ispahanis. Not a single rupee has been given as advance to Ispahanis, said all these honourable gentlemen. To whom have these 15 crores been advanced for purchase of foodgrains?

Now, Sir, there is a short note in the budget stating that the losses which are attributable to shortage, damage and unsaleable stocks have not yet been accounted for. Bengal has a right to know from the Finance Minister and the Civil Supplies Minister as to how many crores of rupees will be thrown out as wastage out of this 15 crores and what machinery has been set up by the Bengal Government in order to find out the exact amount due to shortage, damage and unsaleable stocks (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: To find out the responsibility for the same.) and, as Dr. Sanyal puts it, who is responsible for the loss of this public money. We are all saying that we shall go up to the Government of India and ask for financial assistance. Will the Government of India come to the rescue of the Province of Bengal if there is financial maladministration in addition to food maladministration. If for the purpose of putting money into the pocket of partisans and for the purpose of making them sole agents or chief agents, you had devised a scheme of affairs which did not entail any supervision at all, to whom will you be responsible for this loss of public funds?

Now, Sir, there is one department here to which I might just make a reference. It appears that the expenditure in the Jail Department has increased considerably and if you calculate the figure, you find that the jail population has increased by nearly 40 per cent.—not political prisoners—but that just gives one an indication of the true economic condition of the Province. People, the common people, have resorted to crimes. You have to make room for them inside jails and they find it safer for their very existence to remain inside the jail rather than outside it. That speaks a volume of the present administration—an increase of 40 per cent. of the jail population in the Province.

Now, Sir, as I started by saying, I would like to speak mainly on the food situation. The famine in 1943 has been a blot not only on the provincial administration but on the British administration as well. Who has been responsible for this famine is a matter which I shall not discuss in detail today, but I do want that there should be a clear investigation into the causes of this Bengal famine. People have died—died in thousands, not in thousands but in lakhs and millions—and the tragic part of it is that the Province has gone on as merrily as before. Is it any exaggeration to

say that if such a shocking maladministration had taken place in any other part of the civilised world, that territory would have blazed into an open rebellion? What would have happened in the country from which my friends to the left come if there had been not 10 lakhs or 15 lakhs or 20 lakhs but even 100 men, women and children dying of starvation or lying naked and half-naked or having their food from the open dustbins out of the mouths of dogs and animals? Could the British Government have gone on for a single moment in their own country? But here everything has gone on merrily. It is a shame not only on the administration but it is a shame on the imbecility of the people themselves that they have quietly succumbed. I say it from the bottom of my heart. I say it because I feel that you have gone on in a manner without any regard whatsoever to the real welfare of the people and when you come here and talk in February, 1944, that you do not know how it happened or why it happened, that you cannot apportion blame between this and that, what a poor consolation it is to the people who have gone for ever or to the families which are still facing starvation and miseries.

Sir, it is not merely starvation, it is not merely want of food, but what has been still worse is that Bengal's people have lost their individual and national self-respect. Bengal does not want to depend on charities and doles coming from other Provinces.

(At this stage the blue light was lit.)

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Let me have some time more.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am sorry Dr. Mookerjee, you have already taken much time. I can allow you five minutes more.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: In that case I do not wish to speak. You have allowed other members to speak for half an hour. Why should you not give me some more time? If you say that I cannot get more time, then with great respect to the Chair I shall sit down.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: All right, Dr. Mookerjee, you go on.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Sir, I shall pass on to the present situation. What is the present situation now? And here I ask the members of the Legislature irrespective of party affiliation to apply their minds to the situation as it stands in Bengal today. Believe me, Sir, I am not speaking here as a partisan, I am not speaking as one belonging to Opposition who wants merely to attack Government because it is a Government which is controlled by persons who are our political opponents. Do you feel satisfied with the present state of affairs in your own mind? That is the straight question which I would like to ask the members of this House. Everyone of us will say that we want that Bengal may not have to face another famine, but believe me, Sir, that the way in which things are going on, indicates that a crisis will come and that will be a crisis which can be averted today if there is a real will on the part of the Government and the people to save the Province. That is the tragic part of it. This time last year or a little later perhaps the situation went out of control, but now the situation has not yet gone out of control and you can save it, but the governmental machinery is moving on in a manner which will not enable Bengal to be saved and what is it that you are doing now? There

is a complete black-out so far as publication of news and views with regard to the food policy of Government is concerned (Cries of "hear, hear" from the Opposition benches). The Food Minister is not here, the Chief Minister is not here. We are discussing problems vitally affecting the welfare of millions of people and this is the consideration which is shown by two of the most important Ministers who are responsible for the food policy of this Province. The Finance Minister is merely carrying somebody else's baby. It will be no use for him to get up and justify or explain the food policy of the Government of Bengal. There is a complete black-out today, I say, of the publication of news and views so far as the food policy is concerned. Orders have been issued by the Government of Bengal that nothing will be allowed to be published (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Shame, shame) which may go to suggest that there is inefficiency or muddle on the part of Government. There is no guarantee that the Government will not be guilty of muddle or inefficiency. There is a party Government which has been placed in office and which is carrying on its activities in a manner which we conscientiously feel is against the welfare of the Province as a whole. There is no possibility of our giving expression to our views outside the Chamber of the Legislature. The newspapers cannot publish anything. Whatever is sought to be sent out is gagged. Everything is to be censored and a general direction has been issued to the press in Bengal that you must not say anything which suggests that the Government of Bengal has been guilty of muddle or inefficiency with regard to the food policy. I ask, Sir, is that co-operation? (Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: Is that anti-Fascism?) I ask what is the difference between this state of rule and that state of rule which you say you are out to destroy as a result of this war, this devastating war, from one part of the globe to the other. What is Hitler guilty of? What is Tojo guilty of? You issue your publications, you issue your leaflets and pamphlets that they want to suppress everything by force. What is it that you are doing? You are doing exactly the same thing. If they want to do something which quickens the death of human beings, you are here only by a slow process of misery and starvation strangulating the entire nation.

Now, Sir, what is the position exactly with regard to food? There is, in the first place, the question of rehabilitation. What is there in this huge budget to disclose Government's policy and programme for rehabilitation? (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Rs. 3,000 for a committee.) There is the big task of rehabilitation affecting three classes of people in every part of the Province. Wherever we receive information from, it goes to suggest that there are a large number of people who have lost everything including thir capacity to earn their livelihood. They have somehow to live and live on other people's charity. Private charities have dried up and they are now carrying on their existence which merely postpones the date of their final disappearance from this earth. There is a second class of people who have the capacity to earn but who have lost everything that they had and that means a big scheme for economic rehabilitation of these people. We do not want them to depend on doles. Work has to be provided for them and in exchange of work they will be paid either in cash or in kind or in both. There is another class of people who earn something, but that earning is hardly sufficient to meet their daily requirements,

and somehow cheap supply of grains, clothes, medicine and other essentials have to be provided for this class of people. Where is your scheme for saving the people of Bengal? No doubt a curse has come,—a curse which took away millions of people from the Province, but you can convert this curse to God's blessing and save this Province and make her stronger and more beautiful, a place worth living in. This is one part of the problem.

What is the other part of the problem? That is to ensure that foodgrains will be supplied to all classes of people at a reasonably low rate. For that what have you done? This blessed scheme of procurement of yours which cannot be criticised today, because you have gagged public opinion, this scheme of procurement was accepted by you behind closed doors without any consultation with the leaders of public opinion and now you expect that every person of this Province must say that yours is a scheme which is the only scheme imaginable and which must be supported. Whatever your scheme of procurement may be, the fact remains that today prices of rice are rising in many parts of the Province. What is the minimum price you want should be fixed for rice? Have you made any decision in regard to that? How long will you take to come to that decision? Sir, I have got returns, which I am not going to read out except a summary of them. I have got returns from Barisal, from Burdwan, from Dacca, from Faridpur, from Jessore, from Khulna, from Malda, from Midnapore, from Mymensingh, Nadia, Pabna, Rangpur, Tippera, 24-Parganas and last but not the least from the poor district of Chittagong, and you will find from the tabular replies which we have got from different places that there is a steady rise in prices of rice in all these places, that black-market is prevailing before the very nose of the District Officers. You say you will not allow these things to be published in newspapers. Well, by mere banning of these news and views which certainly suggest that evil days are coming, will you save the Province of Bengal? Will that save the gallant 13 Ministers supported by 17 Parliamentary Secretaries? Will that save even this gallant band of their party-men?

Now, Sir, what is happening? What is happening in a nutshell is this: Your transport facilities, having broken down, are not helping you as much as they should mainly on account of the war. The war conditions are there. Transport facilities have broken down. You have also choked the normal trade channels. You have done it because you say that the trade does not play its part. Very well, if you have done so, where is the alternative machinery set up for serving every nook and corner of this blessed province with foodgrains? A reference was made to the utilisation of the trade channels in the Gregory Committee Report. You read it and that is the point which they have made clear in an abundant measure that if you want to do away with the normal trade channels, you must simultaneously set up an alternative machinery, widespread, efficient, so as to cover every part of the province. That is not possible. It is no use sending 20,000 maunds of rice to Dacca and making it known through the radio. Every village in the district of Dacca wants rice and that rice the villagers are not getting today. That is exactly what is happening. On the other hand, you have choked the trade channels. It is no use my going into details, because most members come from the rural areas. May be that Dacca is a deficit district, may be that Faridpur is a deficit district, but from time

immemorial some parts of Dacca were linked up with some parts of Faridpur. You will not allow any rice to be brought in through the local trade as they used to do from before. You have stopped this. Very well, if that is your declared policy, do so. But what is your alternative machinery for sending foodgrains to those villages, and to those areas? Sir, I am often accused of merely offering destructive criticism but six months ago I made the suggestion: "If Bengal is to be saved, divide Bengal as was done in 1872 into as many small groups as possible. You have got 5,000 union boards. Make these 5,000 Union Board areas special centres to remain under the control of Government and create a store for every such group of villages." People have lost their confidence in the Government. Did not Government say last year "Rice and everything else will come in time"? They never came and lakhs of people died and a similar repetition is going to be made in 1944. There is the same complacency. Mr. Hutchings comes by air from Delhi, moves about in the air, and then goes back to Delhi and says, "Everything is O.K. Do not have any false sense of defeatism." I would like to sound a note of warning on the floor of this House that unless you can compel Government to change its policy and programme, there is absolutely no hope for the Province; the people of Bengal will not be satisfied with mere statements or even with the operation of the Defence of India Rules. They want to see before their very eyes a visible demonstration, a manifestation, of foodgrains and other essential supplies which will be distributed to them at as cheap a rate as possible. That is the only solution. The machinery has completely broken down. It will be for the Hon'ble Minister to get up here and give us details as to what the Government policy and programme are. Lastly, Sir, the Calcutta Rationing Scheme, my friend has said, has been more successful than what was expected—mark his words, very cunningly put with all respect to the Hon'ble Leader of the European Group—better than what was expected. Perhaps, he expected a complete catastrophe and now it is a little better than that and therefore it is better than what was expected. What Mr. Hendry's expectation was is concealed in his bosom and I do not know what that blessed thing was. In any case, what is happening in Calcutta is not certainly a credit to this Governmetnt (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: To any Government) or to any Government.

There again you have deliberately ignored the recommendations of the Foodgrains Committee. About 78 per cent. of the total consumers' cards have been allotted to Government shops and only about 22 per cent. of the consumers' cards have gone to private shops. The directive give by the Government of India for 55 per cent. private shops and 45 per cent. Government shops has thus been openly violated. Why this anxiety to have Government shops? Obviously politics, or in the language of Mr. Hendry, Leader of the European Party—Party squabbles! Why is this anxiety to have Government shops at all? Why should Government not accept the recommendations of the Foodgrains Committee. Was it not because it meant patronage, it meant favouritism and partisanship.

Now what about the quality of the rice. As regards the quality of the rice which has been supplied, I have had it examined by medical experts, one of whom happens to be connected with the All-India Institute of Hygiene

and Public Health and he is not moved by considerations of party politics. Here are extracts from the reports: The samples are in such a state of decomposition that chemical analysis would be of no value because the stocks in question are obviously inedible. There are changes of green, suggestive of copper contamination. Samples are not suitable for human consumption. A number of insect-eggs were present." They may be specially presented to the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies. Regarding samples from another stock which was sent to the Indian Institute of medical research, the report says that they would not only suffer nutrition but are likely to cause diseases and even cause poisoning. I do not say that every grain which is being distributed is of this quality, but I ask why on earth should this sort of stuff be distributed from the ration shops in Calcutta at all? Who was responsible for bringing foodgrains from outside. Mr. Suhrawardy says "The Government of India". Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava says "I do not understand what Mr. Suhrawardy says". There is one expression which Mr. Suhrawardy always indulges in and it is "nonsense". Obviously his reply is related to that particular category by Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava. Now the Leader of the European Party has said arrangements have now been made for an examination of the stuff, but that is not the point. The question which we have repeatedly asked and which the Press has asked, but which the Press has been gagged not to ask, is why has there been no checking till now and where are the foodgrains kept. What steps have been taken by Government to ensure that they do not get mixed up with the huge stocks which were brought by Mr. Ispahani and others most of which is inedible; what guarantee has been taken so that the new stock which is coming in does not get mixed up with the stocks which were in possession of provincial stockists of the Government of Bengal? There was that huge stock lying in the Botanical Gardens. I myself visited that place. Many other people, responsible persons, have also visited that place. Lakhs of maunds of foodgrains are lying on the ground and some portion was covered by a canvas, and some not. In some places, the smell was so horrible that one could not pass in front of those stocks. I was told that they would not be sent to Calcutta but that they would be sent to Jalpaiguri for the Tea Estates. If it was sent to Calcutta, there might be people coming inside the Legislature and shouting. So far as Jalpaiguri Tea Estates are concerned, it would be far away from Calcutta and whether another few lakhs of people lived or died, what does it matter to the Bengal Ministry. Now, Sir, these stocks have been lying there. About 4 weeks ago a letter was sent to the Press by a responsible gentleman in Calcutta whose name I do not want to disclose. I have got a copy of the letter with me here. It was sent to a newspaper. It was just a bare statement of fact drawing the attention of Government to the disgraceful state of affairs and he was informed that under orders given from Writers' Buildings this letter could not be published. That is how public opinion is respected. That is how people are prevented from expressing their opinion on matters which vitally concern their health and welfare.

Now, Sir, the conditions imposed on the private retailers also need a reference. Rs. 6,000 is demanded as deposit in the bank for each private

shop. They are given Rs. 4,000 worth of foodgrains. They are not allowed to weigh and they are not allowed to examine the qualities of the foodgrains. There is no compensation if there is any loss. There is no petrol coupon given, no facility given for transport, so that they might quickly take the goods to their own shops. And when consumers come and refuse to take delivery of bad stocks, obviously the loss is of the private shops.

So far as the stocks purchased by the Provincial Government are concerned, we have referred to the huge stocks lying in the railway stations near Jessore. Now only two days ago, the Hon'ble Minister or somebody in Delhi said that they had all been disposed of. How they have been disposed of was not disclosed but you read today's *Amrita Bazar Patrika* where a statement is given as to how the paddy was first of all sold to local traders who were prepared to take it but suddenly it was given to some contractors. Permission was refused to local traders to take advantage of the stock. People are suffering from starvation in the neighbouring areas and the stocks of foodgrains were allowed to be removed to another place through a favourite contractor of the Government. How these things are going on and what are happening behind the scene we cannot say.

To conclude, Sir, what is the remedy if the situation persists in the present year also? I say that there is not the least doubt that if the present maladministration continues for some more months, there will be another terrible catastrophe in Bengal. Last year people had some reserve, both physical and also reserve of stocks. These reserves have vanished. People are just now living from hand to mouth, they are keeping themselves unfed and half-starved; they may not now be dying in hundreds, but I ask will you wait in 1944 for that fateful day when people of Bengal will die again of starvation? Will you sit idle here and allow this mockery to continue? Keeping in view the consideration of the welfare of the millions of Bengal's population I do say that at this time it is impossible for this Province to be ruled by any group or party, leaving all other political parties aside. If you want to save Bengal, if that be your motto, it is essential that there must be a real political truce in the Province, not the sort of political truce that we witness now. (Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: We are prepared to accept it.) You read *Azad* of a few days ago in which there appeared an appeal by the Hon'ble Ministers to the electors of Noakhali in connection with the election to the District Board. There the Muslim League slogan of Pakistan has been accepted as the goal, and Sir Nazimuddin is writing and signing and appealing as Chief Minister to the people of Noakhali to stand by the Muslim League and vote for Pakisthan. You talk of politics and squabbles! A shameless thing is going on openly. When there is honest opposition to the Government you cry that the accusers are guilty of partisanship. But the fact remains, this Government is a party Government and it is being run as such. I am prepared to admit that there are members in the Ministry representing the Muslim point of view with large following though there are large sections of Muslims with the Opposition also. The Muslim community is divided, but so far as the Hindu community is concerned, let me say this without any fear of contradiction that the present Government does not enjoy the confidence of a single self-respecting Hindu of this Province. I would ask any of those Hindu gentlemen sitting over

there to resign their seats and seek re-election from any constituency in Bengal. (Loud noise from the Coalition Benches.) You ask your Finance Minister to resign and seek re-election, and then you will see whether you have got a single Hindu to support you.

Lastly, I would ask the members of the European Group (Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: শেষকালে সেই Europeanদের কাছে। yes, because it is the most important party in this House which brought the present Ministry into office—I would ask the members of the European group to put their hands on their hearts and ask themselves how far they are justified at this crisis in keeping in power a Government which is corrupt, inefficient and dishonest, and which has failed to serve the best interests of the Province at a critical period, denounced by the entire section of the Hindus and a large section of the Mussalmans.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in my present state of health I would not have taken up the time of the House by making any speech after what has been said regarding the Budget by previous speakers, especially by Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee. But, for the certificate given to the Hon'ble Minister for his budget by my esteemed friend Mr. David Hendry who does not know facts or knowing facts willingly conceals them, I cannot but speak to the House my mind regarding the very background against which the present Ministry have been carrying on their activities today. Sir, my physical strength is almost exhausted, but I wish to speak a few sentences. I have never done it in my life to write out my speech, but today I have had to do that, and if you permit my friend Mr. Badruddoja to read for me, I shall be grateful.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am sorry, that has never been the practice here.

Mr. SYED BADRUDDOJA: Sir, can he not read sitting?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, that he can do.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: I hope, Sir, there will not be any interruption. But if my speech is offensive, my friends have got the right to give a reply at proper place and time, but to interrupt a person who is sick is most unwelcome and it may affect my health.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There will be no interruption while you speak and also while the Hon'ble Finance Minister will speak.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: If there are interruptions, that will create my mental excitement against which my doctors have advised me, and therefore I would request my friends not to interrupt me.

Now, Sir, during my long, varied and uninterrupted experience of annual Budgets, both Provincial and Central, extending for over 30 years in the Bengal Legislature and 2 years in the Central Legislature I cannot recall any instance in which any exhibition of financial bankruptcy of a Government had produced so profound an impression on the public mind as the Bengal Budget presented to this House by Bengal's Finance Minister a few days ago. My connection with the Bengal Legislative Council, the predecessor of the present Bengal Legislatures, began in 1912 with the introduction of the Minto-Morley Reforms, and since then I have been connected with the Bengal Legislature without a break, except for 2 years

when I was a member of the Central Legislative Assembly. I have seen instances of very huge deficits at the Centre, but even those appalling deficits were not disproportionate to the resources of the Central Government. But the case of the present Bengal bankruptcy is unprecedented in history. It is worse than even mere bankruptcy. The ordinary bankrupt at least entertains a lingering hope that possibly, at some distant date, he may be able to be on his feet again. But the bankruptcy of the Bengal Government is so appalling and staggering that there is no room for hope. The more we contemplate it, the more we are driven to the darkness of blank despair. The Finance Minister has hinted that the deficit by April 15th may be in the proximity of 20 crores of rupees, but I feel convinced that the real deficit will be somewhere in the neighbourhood of 50 crores. The situation is so terribly alarming that there would have been a revolution in the country had it not been for the fact that Bengal is absolutely dead, politically, economically and even morally. I have come to this House today, practically against medical advice, because I feel that I should not allow the present situation to go unnoticed, without the actual facts being placed before an unsuspecting people who are being hurried to their doom by an irresponsible Ministry. There are people who think that the ghastly deficit, which the Budget has disclosed, has been due to unforeseen calamities, and causes over which the Ministry have had no control. I will presently show that these deficits are the inevitable results of the reckless extravagance on the part of Ministers in dealing with public funds, of a heedless pursuit of policies of self-aggrandisement and an irrepressible desire on the part of men dealing with public funds to become rich in the shortest possible time. Only the other day, the Hon'ble Khwaja Shahabuddin was boasting of the achievements of the present Ministry. I confess that the House was not surprised to hear of such boastings of achievements. A Ministry which has been especially commissioned by the Almighty Allah to liberate the Muslims from Hindu and British yoke and to establish Pakistan Empire on the earth, must have many achievements to their credit. For instance, they have fixed the maximum price of jute so as to ensure fat dividends to jute mills; they have doubled the rate of Sales Tax at a time when the people have been actually dying of starvation; they are going to put the halter of half a dozen unforeseen taxes round the necks of the hapless people of Bengal. But there are two achievements of the present Ministry which will remain chiselled in history. The first is the devastating famine, unparallelled in the annals of any country in recent times, which began after their assumption of office and still shows no signs of abatement; the second is the creation of a yawning deficit in the public finances which has produced a Budget, whose figures in cold print, creep through the marrow of our bones till we stand aghast at the national calamity with which we are faced. It will take at least fifty generations to make up the gap in the population caused by the famine; but it will take at least a hundred generations to put Bengal finances again in order. The famine has come to be known as having been a man-made one; the present Budget with its appalling deficit can likewise be easily traced to human origin. And that origin is the present Ministry. How is it, we naturally ask, that the Ministers have been able to put so many achievements to their credit in so short a time? To me the answer is clear. In the first place, I hold the

view that for all practical purposes, there has been anarchy prevailing in Bengal instead of settled Government, since the present Ministers came into offices. Secondly, the semblance of a Government that now prevails in Bengal is the very reverse of democracy, because it is really autocracy in which the persons in authority exercise an amount of irresponsible power which even the Czar in his wildest dreams might have envied. Provincial autonomy under the Act of 1935 stands completely strangled and conditions are now much worse than they were when the bureaucrats of old used to exercise autocratic power. Ministers have taken advantage of the prevailing anarchy to squander public money recklessly, without the slightest regard to the rules of common decency, and thereby created deficits for which taxations during these abnormal times is said to have become a necessity. In the Legislative Assembly, votes are seldom cast on the merits of a question raised, but in many cases the votes are only a *quid pro quo* for considerations in connection with which the Bengal Legislature has earned an unenviable notoriety throughout India. The Ministers have managed to take advantage of the situation and have achieved for themselves an invulnerable position by winning over supporters by questionable methods and by various other means not sanctioned by honesty or uprightness. They are now in the position of irremoveable executives, exercising unlimited autocratic powers which has in many respects converted public administration in Bengal into a public scandal.

Mr. SYED BADRUDDUJA: As his strength is failing may I read out the remainder of his speech?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I find there is no rule to adopt such a procedure and I also do not find any rule barring it. I do not like to create any convention here in the absence of Mr. Speaker, but considering the condition of the health of the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition any member of this House may read his speech and I hope the House will allow this concession.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Sir, I have every sympathy for the state of health of the Leader of the Opposition but our difficulty is that a convention like this would introduce a dangerous practice because it is a question which does not affect only the Leader of the Opposition but it affects the whole House. This is not the only occasion when a member or even the Leader of the Opposition has fallen ill. There have been perhaps in the past occasions like this but on no occasion this practice was allowed.

Point of Order.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of order. I find that in the rules there is a provision for Parliamentary Secretaries functioning as Ministers and I have often found printed speeches of Ministers being read out by respective Parliamentary Secretaries with or without any authority, written or otherwise, handed over to the Speaker. Sir, in the patricular case here without meaning any disrespect to the feelings of Government party members I submit to you that in case my friend Mr. Badruddoja gets up and says "As directed by my leader I am reading out a statement as follows" and with that prelude he reads out, where is the rule to prevent him from doing it?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no rule barring it but there is one particular case, as I said already, in which while in the Chair I relaxed the rule and allowed the speech which was not read in the House to be a part of the proceedings of the Assembly.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: I am surprised to see that a question like this has been raised by Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal. He himself objected to a Parliamentary Secretary replying to a question or reading a printed answer and that was done under the rules, and when the rules were pointed out to Dr. Sanyal he was compelled to accept it.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will go on. The members have a right to speak in the House but there is nothing in the rule to say that a member is bound to make himself heard. I will read.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is certain that there is no rule for members to be heard but our Reporters must hear it; otherwise it cannot be a part of the proceedings.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mr. Fazlur Rahman, the great interpretor of rules in this House, has raised a point. Now you have pointed out that there is no rule either way. If there is no rule either way there is the reserve authority in the Chair to deal with a situation of that character. You have stated already that you are making an exception in the present case in favour of the Leader of the Opposition, who is ill and is personally present, and who has read a part of his speech and is asking somebody else on his behalf to present before the House the rest of his speech. It is a peculiar situation which has not been provided for by the rules. It is exactly for such a situation that reserve authority in the Chair has been vested in him.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. David Hendry, I want to hear your opinion on this matter.

Mr. DAVID HENDRY: This, as Mr. Santosh Kumar Basu has said, is a very peculiar situation, but I recall a short time ago hearing Mr. Fazlul Huq himself say that the only speaker from his party was Mr Badruddoja and on that score an extension of time was requested on behalf of Mr. Badruddoja. Evidently Mr. Fazlul Huq had his speech prepared and written out beforehand. If he attached particular importance to his speech being made, then I consider that it should have been made then and not kept until this late hour when the sitting had already exceeded its normal time.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: He is speaking as the Leader of the Opposition and not as a member of his party.

Mr. DAVID HENDRY: In this particular case I do not think that permission ought to be given for his speech to be read either by him or by any one else.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, before you invite further opinion on this question may I make a submission to you? I do not stand on technicality. I am not very much conversant with rules, but there are certain things which are higher than rules and, I believe that here you will use your own judgment, you are not an automaton, you are

not a machine. If you cannot find any precedent, you can certainly create conventions on occasions like this. Apart from that, Mr. Fazlul Huq is not only the Leader of the Opposition, he is also one of the senior parliamentarians of the province of Bengal, and having regard to the fact that admittedly in this particular case he has taken pains to come with certain information and wants to offer certain comments, I submit, Sir, that you should not stand in need of any advice from any quarter. It is for you to consider whether you will allow him or not. I appeal to you, do not look for advice from this side or that side. You decide yourself and allow somebody else to read out his speech.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Goswami, what is your opinion?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a very delicate and embarrassing situation in which you are placing me; because I have every sympathy and besides great respect—for the Leader of the Opposition in view of the fact that he is not well. (Uproar.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order. I have requested the Hon'ble Finance Minister to give his personal opinion.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Sir, we should have very much liked to hear Mr. Fazlul Huq, but I am not quite certain that it would be technically right to take his speech as read and I think it is still more doubtful if any other member can read his speech. It is contrary to all rules. (Uproar.) I think this is a matter which you should decide yourself. The trouble is that it is not a speech which is printed and which is before the honourable members. I am really at a loss to advise you for the simple reason that it is very difficult for me to avoid being misunderstood. At the same time, I do not think that it would be correct to adopt a procedure which would create a convention of a doubtful character.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Sir, if the Leader of the Opposition today is allowed to have his speech read out by another member of this Assembly, that will lead to the demand by other members also in similar circumstances that their speeches should be permitted to be read by other members of this House. Just imagine what a situation it will create in this House if the speech of the Leader of the Opposition is permitted to be read by another member. Sir, up till now those members who are ill do not deliver their speeches, because they know that they will not be allowed to have their speeches read by other members. But once you allow this to be done, no matter in whose case it may be, either in the case of the Leader of the Opposition or somebody else, every sick member of every party will come forward in future to claim this right and say that if you could make an exemption in the case of the Leader of the Opposition in a particular circumstance, why should it not be done in the case of other members?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will again seek your assistance as to whether I can exercise my individual judgment under rule 116 of the Assembly Procedure Rules which runs thus:

> "116(1) The Speaker may, by orders not inconsistent with these rules, provide for matters for which no provision is made, and may give such directions as may be necessary for giving effect to these rules and such orders".

I seek your assistance once more. I hope Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri will tell me whether I can give permission under these rules.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I was one of the members of the committee which framed these rules and I can say from personal experience that that rule was framed for the purpose of providing for such and other contingencies which could not be foreseen. As an old member of this House I can say that on many occasions in the past answers printed in the name of one Minister have been read out by another Minister. Those instances are known to all the members of this House and if printed answers to questions set down in the name of one Minister can be read out by another Minister, I cannot understand why a speech prepared by one member cannot be read out by another member, and in view of that fact I cannot understand why Mr. Fazlul Huq should not be allowed to have his speech read out by another member of this House.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: I am surprised that both Dr Sanyal and Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri have referred to a certain practice of this House which they know is allowed under the rules. In order to remove that impression I may refer them to the definition of "Minister". The definition runs thus: "Minister" means a member of the Council of Ministers, and includes any member to whom such Minister may delegate any function assigned to him under these rules". If a Minister delegates his power of reading, for example, if the Finance Minister in the case of a financial statement wants that his statement should be read out by a Parliamentary Secretary or by any other member of this House, he can do so. It is a question of delegation. I will just tell you the other aspect of the question. These rules have conferred certain privileges and rights on the members, viz., that member can put questions or a member can participate in the debate, etc.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, no.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: My point of order is this.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You cannot rise.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Do you deny me my right to rise on a point of order?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Sir, the Speaker under Rule 116 may by orders not inconsistent with these rules provide for matters for which no provision is made, but for making statements in the House and for participating in the debates of this House rules have been provided. It cannot be said, therefore, that no provision has been made for that.

(Interruption.)

The rules provide for positive things only; the rules do not provide for negative things. Rules for conducting debates in this House, and for participation by members in the debates have been provided for. Therefore rule 116 cannot apply here.

The second point is that in the case of a Minister he can delegate his powers to any member of this House, but a member cannot delegate his power to any other member It is not a matter of mere reading of a speech. It will be creating a precedent inconsistent with parliamentary practices. I appeal to you that this precedent should not be created which is illegal.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order. In spite of all those things my idea is this: The Chair has certain prerogatives here as elsewhere. I hope you will have no objection if I read out that speech from the Chair.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: We have made our submission and now it is for you to decide.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Then I take it that members will not object if I ask Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri to read the remaining portion of Mr. Huq's speech.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: I would like to place on record our protest against this which is illegal and inconsistent with the rules.

General discussion of the Budget.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Sir, I do not ask for any privilege, and I hope that although I am in bad health I have got much more strength than young men in health. I shall go on with my speech.

I have said that there is, constitutionally speaking, no Government in Bengal. Apparently, there is a Government functioning under the Act of 1935, to which the Secretary of State for India, referred exultingly the other day as a Government by Ministers enjoying the confidence of the majority of the Legislature. But what actually are the facts? According to the Act of 1935, there should be complete democracy, wherever Provincial autonomy is functioning, in which there would be a Government of the people, by the people and for the people. This is, however, not the case in Bengal. Here the Ministers are not responsible to the Legislature at all, but are responsible to Mr. Jinnah as the head of the Muslim League. So long as the Ministers have the approval of Mr. Jinnah, they need not concern themselves about the views of individual members, because they know that the members supporting them do not care for the opinions of their constituencies but are anxious to secure the good opinion of Mr. Jinnah. This may sound surprising, but it is nevertheless a fact. Muslims outside the Muslim League belong to two classes; firstly, those who cannot join the League on account of the autocracy of Mr. Jinnah; secondly, those who are opposed to the very ideology of the League and cannot therefore conscientiously become members of the League and accept the leadership of Mr. Jinnah. It so happens, however, that although the Muslims outside the League are numerically superior to those in the League, they are utterly disorganised and are no match for the political and diplomatic manoeuvres of Mr. Jinnah. Unforeseen circumstances have also helped the Muslim League. During the Congress regime of Provincial Autonomy in seven Provinces, the Congress volunteers and officials were often guilty of indiscreet excesses which were strongly resented by Muslims as encroachments on their legitimate rights, and which created a strong anti-Hindu feeling in the minds of the Muslims throughout India. The Muslim League was quick to seize its opportunity. By unceasing propaganda and clever distortion of facts, they managed to rouse the passions of the Muslim multitude against the Congress and, as a next step against the Hindu community Muslims were thus naturally drawn towards the Muslim League as the only organised political body among the Muslims and their only haven of refuge against Hindu oppression. British Imperialistic policy also

favoured the growing political strength of the Muslim League, because the British Government expected to be able to set off the Muslim League against the political ascendency of the Congress. The result is that the Muslim League has now got a foothold in the land which is not justified by the extent to which it can truly claim to be representative of Muslim interests. This strength of the Muslim League is being fully utilised by the Ministers. They have managed to keep their supporters spellbound under the name of the Muslim League and they are confident that no one will desert them so long as they have the blessings of Mr. Jinnah. And to such a length has this fear of Mr. Jinnah got into the marrow of the bones of M. L. A.s that even if Ministers undertake a policy which is suicidal to the best interests of the country and resented by the majority of the people of the Province, they can carry on their own project so long as Mr. Jinnah approves of what the Ministers are doing. Take the case of the taxation proposals. Bengal may cry hoarse and resent these taxation proposals and the members of the Assembly or at least a vast majority of them may be convinced that the people of Bengal resent these taxations, but if Mr. Jinnah does not object to these taxations, the Ministers will not care two brass buttons what the members or the people of the province think of the Ministerial policy. In other words, the Ministers are working the machine of provincial autonomy, not according to the wishes of the people or even the guidance of the Governor, but according to the dictates of a Dictator utterly ignorant of the real feelings of the people. This is certainly not provincial autonomy, but autocracy of the worst possible kind carried on under the guise of provincial autonomy.

Let me give the House another illustration: we all know that the highest personages, the Viceroy, the Governors and even the Secretary of State together with permanent officials in the Central Government and in the Provinces together with the leaders of political thoughts all over the country, have been most anxious that, during these abnormal times, there should be an All-Party Government in Bengal. But we all know that in spite of these anxieties in the highest quarters, no such Government could be set up in Bengal. And why? Because Mr. Jinnah has given his fiat that no Muslims should be represented in the United Cabinet unless they are members of the Muslim League. This little thrust by Mr. Jinnah has upset the whole programme and the highest and most influential in the land stand paralysed before the will of Mr. Jinnah. The Muslim League Ministers have refused to co-operate with Muslims who are not in the League and hence the idea of a National Government could not be carried out. In this case, again, the Ministers have not listened to the voice of the people or even of the Governor, Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India, but that of Mr. Jinnah. It is not the Ministers functioning under the Government of India Act that are ruling Bengal, but it is the autocracy of Mr. Jinnah which guides the administration. And Mr. Jinnah is exercising all this authority without being hampered by any responsibility to anybody. All this may be a very clever imitation of Congress methods and very flattering to Congress-minded people, but it is not democracy. In the case of the Congress the mandates used to come from Wardha; in the case of the Muslim League the mandates come from Malabar Hill. And whether it is a province governed under section 93 of the Act or under the bastard

rovincial autonomy under Muslim League, the result is all the same. The ct of 1935 has been cast to the winds by the Indians themselves as a grim 'arning to future makers of the Constitution in India.

While things in matters of administration have come to this lamentable ass, Bengal is also one of the poorest of the Indian provinces, not merely rom the economic point of view but also in the matter of dearth of public ıen to fight for the rights of the people. I have always been proud of Bengal, proud of its achievements in the fields of Science, Literature and ırt, of Law and Medicines, of Philosophy and Politics and also in all those lements of culture which are the pride and glory of every civilised nation. will not talk of other matters, but I will only refer briefly to the political ankruptcy into which Bengal has fallen. This pitiable and much despised Bengal of today is the Bengal which produced W. C. Bonnerjee, Surendra Nath Banerjee, Narendra Nath Sen, Matilal Ghose, Bhupendra Nath Basu, al Mohan Ghosh, Shamsul Huda, Abdul Rasul, Aswini Dutt, Ambika Majumdar and others too numerous to mention. I remember the days revious to the introduction of Minto-Morley Reforms when Bengal was upposed to be under the administration of irresponsible bureaucrats and hen the political privileges now enjoyed by the people were utterly nknown. But in those days of autocracy if anything were to happen hich was likely to go against the interest of the people in the slightest egree, the public platform and the press would ring with denunciations of Government conduct and Government policy, and in the vast majority of ases public protests used to prevail. But what is the case today? On heir own showing and according to their own admissions, the Ministers, by heir irresponsible policy and reckless extravagance, have brought about one f the most devastating famines known in history. And when the cup of nisery of the people was full, horrible atrocities were perpetrated on the oor and the helpless destitutes of Calcutta on the plea of removing them o suitable habitations elsewhere. I have seen dire scenes of horror which t is impossible for my pen to describe but not even the hundredth part of hese atrocities would have been possible even thirty years ago. But now verything is possible, because there is none to protest. Throughout Bengal there is none who seems prepared to raise his little finger to save his eople from oppression, or from the policy of the Ministers which may bring bout ruin and devastation in the country.

But the picture of Bengal's woes and miseries is not yet complete. In very civilised country the Press has been the custodian of liberty of the eople, and in all times of difficulties people living under any civilised dministration have looked upon the sturdy independence of the press for he protection of their lives and liberties. But even the Press in Bengal oday is utterly paralysed. While the taxation Bills are before the Legisative Assembly and the halters of taxation are being put round our necks nost of the stalwarts of Indian journalism seem to be busy in writing rudite articles about Bolshevism in Russia, Roosevelt's successor at the ext election and various other matters which are as important to the people f the province as the age of the man in the moon. The Ministers have ignalised their autocracy by gagging the Bengal Press absolutely and ompletely. The Press Censor has promulgated his mandate that everything ikely to reflect on the Ministry must be submitted to him for censorship

before publication, and our newspapers have complacently accepted this *dogmatic domination of the Press Censor. Even statements made in the* Houses of Legislature come under the pruning knife of the Press Censor, and the Press are permitted to publish only what suits the fancy of the Press Censor. Bengal has accepted this position without demur, because real patriots are dead and gone, and their descendants have been mysteriously muzzled. The result has been that nothing adverse to the Ministry can appear in print, and anything that does appear relates to matters which are laudatory of the present Ministers and their policy. Things were different in days gone by. It is well known that the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* was originally only a vernacular weekly, but very bitter in its criticism of Government. It used to lash the executive authorities so mercilessly that Government became furious with this little vernacular paper. In order to gag the vernacular *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and one or two other vernacular journals, the Government passed the Vernacular Press Act aimed obviously at the extermination of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. The result was that Matilal Ghose of revered memory accepted the challenge and the day when the Act was promulgated the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* appeared as an English daily with its avowed policy of merciless criticism of the Government. Alas! the days of Matilal Ghose, Surendra Nath Banerjee, Narendra Nath Sen are no more; they were lions in their own days and we have got the descendants of the lions of Indian journalism in our midst today. But the difference between the two classes of lions is very significant. Those were lions whose roars used to reverberate from Bengal across the seven seas to the homes of the British nation, but in the case of the present lions they are as docile as lions in a circus show. The roar of the lions of old used to make thrones tremble, but most of the present lions only know how to crouch beneath the throne and wag their tails in approbation of Government policy.

Such in brief outline has been the position in Bengal since the deportation of Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose and the imprisonment of prominent leaders under the Defence of India Act. Bereft of political leadership and with a Press paralysed under the rigours of the Defence of India Rules, Bengal lay prostrate at the feet of her rulers, black and white, gasping frantically for the breath of freedom but kept down in bondage by the iron rule of merciless autocracy. There prevailed the silence of the grave all over the land and men in authority could trample upon popular rights in any way they liked.

It was in these favourable conditions that the present Ministry took office on the 24th April, 1943. I have already made a full statement in this House regarding the circumstances in which my Ministry came to an end, and the present Ministers came into power. I do not wish to take up the bitter memories of the past, especially as the Chief Actor in that Drama is now dead and gone and I do not wish to tarnish his memory any further. But I cannot avoid emphasizing the fact that the conspiracy which ultimately led to the termination of my Cabinet was not merely a sinister one, but secretly conceived and worked out and to which some of the persons now in power were a party. It is well known that in April, 1942, Sir John Herbert, the then Governor of Bengal, on the advice of some permanent officials and possibly some members of the then Opposition who are now in the Cabinet, decided to carry out his rice removal policy. When we came to know what was being done, we vehemently protested against Sir John Herbert's policy

on behalf of the entire Cabinet, but to no effect. Subsequent events have shown that the seeds of the appalling disaster which overtook Bengal in 1942-43 were really sown when this ill-fated policy was conceived and carried out in spite of the advice tendered to the Governor by ourselves who were then the Ministers in office. It is impossible to go into the details as to how public money was recklessly squandered away in carrying out Sir John Herbert's policy but I will give only one or two illustrations.

Government Agents were chosen to have a monopoly of the right to purchase rice and paddy in the mofassil and were given the fullest discretion to purchase at whatever price they liked. As soon as these Government agents and their emissaries spread themselves over the land like locusts the price of rice and paddy began to shoot up beyond control. But the mischief did not end with the uncontrolled manner in which the Government agents and their lieutenants purchased rice without any regard for economic considerations; there was another sinister method by which the Government agents were enabled to sell their purchased stock to Government at the rate at least 80 per cent. above the rate at which they had purchased rice in the mofassil. The process employed by them was somewhat complicated but it was somewhat on the following lines:—

Sub-agent *A* of one of the Government Agents may have purchased rice at Rs. 20 a maund and sold the purchased stock to Sub-agent *B* at Rs. 22 per maund. This process of fictitious sales and purchases between the lieutenants and agents went on till the last lieutenant purchased from another comrade at Rs. 38 per maund and he sold to the Government agent himself at Rs. 40 per maund without apparently making any profit for himself, but really making a profit of Rs. 20 or so per maund, or in other words a profit of cent. per cent. It is impossible to vouch for the accuracy of details of the allegations made against agents and sub-agents and their lieutenants in the matter of purchase, but public opinion is inclined to the view that the rumours that have been prevalent in the country in these matters are substantially correct. We have repeatedly asked the Government to take the public into confidence and to state the manner in which all these purchases have been made, giving full details of transactions supported by vouchers; but Government has persistently refused to comply with our request. The only concession which the Government have been pleased to make was to give us facility to inspect the Account Books of the agents at headquarters. But we have refused to be silenced by such subterfuges. Even an idiot can understand that books at headquarters do not give any indication of any *badmashi* perpetrated in the mofassil. This was substantially the state of things when the present Ministers were in Opposition and worked out their scheme in secret and without disclosing themselves. But from April, 1943, when they came into power, they threw off the mask and went headlong into these transactions throwing the economic condition of the country into a hopeless morass. I maintain that the famine was principally due to this reckless method of purchase of foodstuffs in the mofussil through monopolists as adopted by the present Ministry. This is borne out by the admission of the Ministers themselves. Twice, during the month of May, 1943, Mr. Suhrawardy declared that there was no shortage of foodstuffs and that the high price prevailing in the country at the time, i.e., May, was due to causes other than economic and only attributable to

psychological factors. On the 15th May, 1943, Sir Azizul Haque made a statement in reply to addresses presented to him at Krishnagar that there was at that time no deficit of foodstuffs in Bengal. On the 25th May Sir Nazimuddin declared at a public meeting at Howrah that Bengal was not a deficit province. It is therefore evident that the deficit disclosed by the famine occurred at least a couple of months after these Ministers had taken office. It follows therefore that the present Ministers are responsible for the famine of 1943. The Ministers embarked upon a policy which was as extravagant as it was politically and economically unwise. It allowed monopolists to purchase foodgrains in the mofussil and it allowed public money to be recklessly spent in order to carry out this policy. The Ministers never took the public into confidence, not even prominent men of business, and the amount advanced to favourites and unaccounted for amounts, according to public estimates, come up to the appalling figure of 8½ crores. It is no wonder that the famine followed this insensate folly of the Ministers as a matter of course. I maintain therefore that I am right in saying that the famine of 1943 was not due to unforeseen causes but was only man-made famine for which the present Ministers are solely responsible.

I would now say a few words as to the acts of the Ministry which have caused an unprecedented drainage upon public resources.

The present Ministry is supposed to have created more than 5,000 new posts of various kinds in order to carry out their food policy. Much of these expenditures was utterly uncalled for and these posts have been only created for the purpose of patronising their friends and the supporters of the Cabinet.

Unfortunately the mood of the Ministers of indulging in extravagant expenditure does not yet seem to be over. Even now they are establishing Government shops in Calcutta for the purpose of finding careers for their friends and supporters.

They have given shops to persons who are absolutely inexperienced in business or trade and the grounds of selection were not the competence and ability to discharge duties entrusted to them but their pledge to support the Cabinet.

There are now rumours of Judicial posts being created without any justification. It is said that some 800 Lawyer-Magistrates would be appointed throughout Bengal on salaries varying from Rs. 400 to Rs. 800 a month. Many of these posts will be given to supporters of the Ministry, most of whom would be found to be briefless lawyers who would not be earning even Rs. 40 a month, and the vast majority of whom never came under the assessment of Income-tax. There is not the slightest justification for these new posts because if Honorary Magistrates are selected with care, any extra judicial work that may be necessary can be safely entrusted to them.

I cannot conclude my observations without making an earnest appeal to my friends of the European Group. When I was in England attending Round Table Conferences, I had occasions to take part in the discussions relating to the representation of various groups in the Legislature. I did not oppose the European demand of 25 seats in the Bengal Legislative Assembly because I thought that these 25 seats would always be cast solely on the merits of questions under discussion, unaffected by the political wranglings that may be going on in the House.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will just interrupt you. How long will you take?

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: May be 5 or 6 minutes.

Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL: Sir, how long will the House continue? May we know the exact time?

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Sir, it is for you to decide. Here you have got the right even to extend for one hour if you think necessary. Here it is no question of rule, it is your discretion. I could have concluded briefly, but since this question has been raised, I will ask you to go on till I have finished.

Sir, I do not mean to say that the members of the European group have actively participated in communal or sectional wranglings, but the manner in which they have been casting their votes in the Legislature for some time past has been a great disappointment to me. They do not seem to have much time to devote to the study of the details of matters that come up before the House, and they cast their votes *en bloc* generally in support of the Ministry that may be in office at the time. Possibly, this is because they hold the view that the boon of self-Government conferred by England on India should be given the utmost possible trial and that a Ministry should not be allowed to become the sport of party politics. But I would ask them to consider what they have been doing for the last one year, viz., since February, 1943. I was then in power as the Chief Minister and I have every reason to believe that the members of the European group knew that my relations with the Governor were anything but smooth. They also knew that in the matter of food control, it was the Governor who actively interfered and he was guided by the advice of some permanent officials rather than the advice of the Ministry. If there was anything wrong, it was because some permanent officials led the Governor into the wrong path and because the Governor would not take the trouble of asking the Ministers to explain the position and then to decide in an impartial spirit. In spite of all these facts, the European group began suddenly to change their age-long policy and to go against me in the Legislature. On one or two occasions they remained neutral but presently they began to vote openly with the Opposition. The excuse was that the price of rice was steadily rising and that people were in acute distress. On every occasion when the question was raised in the House, I pointed out that rise in prices was due not on account of any policy pursued by the Ministers but on account of the action that had been taken by the Governor on the advice of the permanent officials. When our Ministry came to an end by the end of March, the price of rice rose by 50 per cent. and when the present Ministry actually adopted their own policy, Bengal came into the grip of a famine unparallelled in history. It was the duty of the European group to make sifting enquiries as to whether the Ministry had been properly discharging their duties and whether the charges that were beng levelled against the Ministers were founded on facts and whether they deserved the support of the European group. They did nothing of the kind, but went on supporting the Ministry on grounds which, I respectfully submit, appear obviously untenable. Let me tell my friends of the European group that my suspicion is that they went against me and my Cabinet

because it was decided by high personages that our Ministry should come to an end, and that a Muslim League Ministry should be installed in Bengal. I openly formulate my charge that it was a part of British Imperial Policy to pamper the Muslim League and it was a part of that Policy which induced my friends in the European group to vote against my Ministry and with the Opposition. Even now they are supporting the Muslim League Ministry, not because the policy of the Ministers can be supported on the merits, but because the Muslim League Ministry must be kept alive at any cost. People were said to have been in distress when rice was selling at Rs. 20 a maund, but my friends in the European group never said a word when during the present regime the price of rice was Rs. 100 a maund!

As regards the taxation proposals, my friends of the European group should have considered the questions on their merits. They should have held that the Ministry have forfeited the right to support by their extravagant expenditures of public money, and that therefore any taxation proposal should not be supported. Even now they will support the Agricultural Income Tax Bill in case their interests are not affected, although the poverty-stricken people of Bengal may perish by reason of accumulated taxations. Can they deny that they will be failing in their duty if they look only after their sectional interests and safeguard these alone to the detriment of the interests of the people of Bengal as a whole? This is not what I expect of my friends of the European group.

I regret I have had to inflict a long speech containing various matters not directly pertinent to the Budget under discussion. I have avoided a detailed discussion of the Budget, because the discussion that has taken place during the last three days, and especially the speeches that have taken place today, have fully dealt with the Budget on its merits. I have preferred to discuss certain general aspects of the present financial conditions of the country, and I have therefore discussed the entire background against which the present Ministers carry on their activities. They managed to get a majority in the Assembly after assumption of office; they then proceeded to gag the Press completely; so that nothing adverse to their activities may appear in papers; they then advanced public money to their favourites to carry on the rice purchasing policy; and these favourites were permitted to adopt all means, fair or foul, to purchase rice in order to be able to sell to Government at several times the purchased price. This is a doleful picture of maladministration which has tarnished the fair name of British rule in India. And these things are bound to happen, if any political party, represented by a minority in the Legislature, is forcibly put into power by the machinations of unscrupulous people, backed by high personages whose duty it is to keep the balance even between contending factions in the country. And worse things happen if the favoured section represents only the fraction of a community, because apart from other disastrous results, such action naturally divides the community among itself and the community as a whole from other communities in the country. It is true that no unfortunate events in Bengal have followed the action in forcing Sir Nazimuddin and his lieutenants into power. But it should be remembered that a volcano is most dangerous when beneath a surface of apparent calm; there are the simmerings of a burning cauldron of explosives down below,

likely to burst at any moment into an unprecedented eruption. People have been silent so long because we are anxious to avoid hampering war efforts. But it should always be remembered that it is extremely dangerous and impolitic to make recklessly heavy drafts on the Bank of loyalty. It is a friendly warning and I hope our friends of the European group will take it as such.

The whole country is now thick with rumours of the corruption, bribery, extravagant and thoughtless squandering of public money by their favourites. We demanded account to be submitted. We also demanded public enquiry into the causes of the great famine. All our prayers were rejected because the Ministers and their supporters knew that any enquiry into the causes of the famine would have disclosed the manner in which public money had been spent and branded many of the Ministers as rank criminals deserving condign punishment. It has been said that public money thus spent but not accounted for amounts to about eight and a half crores of rupees. The situation is rendered still more difficult by reason of the fact that much of the money which the Minister had allowed to be extravagantly spent was money lent by the Central Government, who will have to be paid back the loan with reasonable interest. The Finance Minister has hinted that further taxation will be a necessity. He need hardly have reminded us of the fate that is in store for us. I am reminded of the story of the hangman in Barisal Jail who used to go about the condemned cells to tell the unfortunate occupants of the cells, of the fate that was awaiting them. The Finance Minister has very much imitated this hangman's policy. We know very well that a Ministry which could have been so shameless as to double the Sales Tax during the rigours of a devastating famine, would not hesitate to put the halters of fresh taxations round our necks. The Ministry knew that there would be no protest because the Press has been gagged and public spirit is now absolutely a thing of the past. But I appeal to the people of Bengal to realise the dangers ahead of us and I appeal to them to rise to the height of the occasion and bring the Ministry to account for their misdeeds and misdemeanour. I request my countrymen to remember the achievements of Bengal in the past and to emulate the examples of their ancestors in saving the country from complete devastation. My last words today are "awake, arise or be for ever fallen". (Loud Applause.)

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have been directed by all parties in the Opposition to submit to you that in view of the discourtesy shown to the Leader of the Opposition, it will be our painful duty not to participate in the proceedings any further tonight.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It will not be fair for the Opposition to do so. Courtesy demands that they should hear the rest of the proceedings of this House.

(At this stage the Opposition members walked out of the Chamber amidst uproar.)

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Sir, I quite appreciate the standard of courtesy of honourable members of the Opposition. So many of my friends on this side patiently heard the set, boring speeches,

inaudible speeches, worthless speeches of the men who have just left. I think it is fitting that I should be speaking in their absence here this evening. (Babu Narendra Narayan Chakrabarty: Hear, hear.)

Of course it may be said that I was paid to be here to hear them when they spoke, but, Sir, there were others on this side who being, gentlemen, showed every courtesy to the leaders of the different groups of the Opposition. The walk-out show had been carefully engineered.

Sir, I shall address those who are present here. And first of all let me say that I am most grateful to Mr. D. Gladding, and I think the House was most grateful to him, for his clear and succinct summary of Bengal's case for a subvention from the Centre. As he said—I am not quoting his exact words but I am only trying to quote as well as I can remember from memory —"despite bumper revenues and the new taxes which we are about to impose, war conditions and the famine brought about by those conditions have forced expenditure to such a pitch that our financial position is broken beyond the remedy of any action which we can in fairness be asked to take. The remedy must come from outside." I entirely agree with that and I agree too that the matter is not one that can be left over to some indefinite future. I appreciate that pending the receipt of actuals of two years' working it will be difficult to suggest what will be an appropriate subvention. My own instinct is to press for the settlement of the actuals on which the subvention shall be calculated rather than to ask for a particular sum.

I think I may mention that since my budget speech I have received an intimation which indicates the way the mind of the Government of India is working in this matter. But in fairness to all concerned—this House, the Government of India and myself,—it would be better to wait for a period of less than 24 hours because within that time the Finance Member of the Government of India will have made his budget speech and it may be that we shall have a more direct indication of the policy of the Government of India in regard to a subvention to Bengal.

It is heartening to me that I have the support of all sections of the House in our demand of assistance from the Government of India. But I think I will refer to one Opposition leader's speech—I am afraid rather disparagingly—for my predecessor in office Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee wanted to provide me with an argument for Sir Jeremy Raisman which I refuse to use. He said, in substance, "He is printing notes; he has got a printing machine. Let him send a few notes to us." Sir, I shall not be an ally to inflation. That is not the argument on which we have based our claim for a subvention. I do not believe that a subvention means increasing inflation in the corresponding manner.

Sir, there is another matter which was raised by the honourable Deputy Leader of the European Group. It is about diversion of the yields from specific taxation measures. I may say that criticism was voiced by more than one honourable member that in the budget for the coming year Government diverted to General Administration purposes the yields from such taxation measures as the Sales Tax and the Jute Sales Tax in violation of the promises given when the approval of the legislature was obtained to these taxation measures.

It may be that the assurance given by my esteemed colleague, Mr. Suhrawardy who was then Finance Minister was such as to give the

impression that the proceeds of the Raw Jute Sales Tax would be funded for financing schemes calculated to further the interests of the jute industry. That is a matter upon which I do not feel myself called upon to pronounce any opinion because if Mr. Walker will kindly turn to page 345 of the Blue Book he will find that the cost of Jute Regulation has been placed at Rs. 50 lakhs during the current year, the net cost being reduced to Rs. 33,34,000 after deduction of contribution of Rs. 16,66,000 by the Civil Supplies Department on account of services of Jute Regulation staff during the anti-hoarding drive, and at Rs. 58 lakhs next year. It will be seen, therefore, that the whole basis of Mr. Walker's criticism is misconceived. But if that were not the case I confess that at the present time when the problem of the Finance Minister is to bridge a gulf of Rs. 10 crores between revenue and expenditure any talk of diversion of funds and the idea of funding receipts from any particular taxation measure are wholly divorced from the realities of the situation.

I may now deal with another criticism equally unrealistic and that is there is no indication in the Budget estimates of how the proceeds of the new taxation proposals are to be utilised. In the first place I have not the habit of counting the chickens before they are hatched. The estimates now under consideration do not take into account the additional revenue I hope to get from the Agricultural income-tax and the enhanced sales tax. Secondly, I would not have thought that it was necessary for me to underline again for every additional rupee that I can raise will be required to lessen the gap between the cost of tackling the aftermath of famine and our existing revenue.

Sir, need I say anything more at this last hour except that it will be my duty to press the claims of Bengal as best as I can before the Government of India? I am doing so.

Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned at 8-45 p.m. till 3-30 p.m. on Wednesday, the 1st of March, 1944, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

The Assembly met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Wednesday, the 1st March, 1944, at 3-30 p.m.

Present:

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Mr. Syed Nausher Ali) in the Chair, 12 Hon'ble Ministers and 183 members.

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Release of political and security prisoners of Midnapore for relief work.

*130. **Mr. NIKUNJA BEHARI MAITI:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department aware of, with regard to Contai and Tamluk subdivisions of Midnapore—

(*i*) the extent of loss in person and property by the last October cyclone in 1942 and tidal bore;

(*ii*) the subsequent loss of life by prevalence of pestilence;

(*iii*) the extent of destruction caused to—

(1) *aus*,

(2) *aman* crops, and

(3) vegetables

by the recent floods in the district in the months of July and August;

(*iv*) high prices, rarity of foodstuffs and prevalence of famine condition; and

(*v*) daily death of hundreds of persons by starvation?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of releasing all security and other political prisoners of the district of Midnapore to give them facilities to work for saving, as far as possible, the lives of men, women and children at least of their own district?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) Yes; but with regard to (*v*) the Hon'ble the Home Minister's information is that although some deaths occurred due to malaria combined with starvation, it could not be said to have occurred by hundreds daily.

(*b*) No.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: With reference to answer (*a*)(*v*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government can give the House an approximate idea as to the number of deaths that have occurred in the locality during the period in question?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The total loss of human lives in Contai was 10,932 and in Tamluk 2,909.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he is aware that the leaders who are detained in jail are respected and that the people obey their instructions more than the instructions of the Government?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That is a matter of opinion.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: With reference to answer (*b*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any security prisoners of Midnapore have ever applied to Government for release in order to devote themselves to relief work exclusively?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Yes, Sir, some security prisoners did apply.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: In view of the reply just now given by the Hon'ble Minister that some security prisoners did apply, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what stood in the way of their release?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The interest of public safety and security.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: With regard to the answer just given by the Hon'ble Minister as to the approximate number of deaths, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the source of his information?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The information was collected by the Revenue Department of Government.

Petitions of Mr. Nishitha Nath Kundu, M.L.A., detained in the Presidency Jail.

***131. Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether Mr. Nishitha Nath Kundu, M.L.A., now detained in the Presidency Jail under Defence of India Rules, sent two petitions to the Home Minister and one to the Superintendent, Presidency Jail, in succession asking for remedy in respect of several grievances?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) the date of those three petitions and the dates when they were received by the respective addressees; and

(*ii*) whether any action or actions were taken on these petitions?

(*c*) If the answer to (*b*) (*ii*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the date when such action or actions were taken?

(*d*) If no action was taken, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reasons thereof?

(*e*) Is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of holding immediate enquiries into the complaints made in those petitions and take proper steps in the matter? If not, why not?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) and (*c*) The petitions, addressed to the late Hon'ble Chief Minister and Home Minister, were received by the Superintendent, Presidency Jail,

on the 29th September, 1942, *i.e.*, before the honourable member was made a security prisoner under Government order No. 6357H.J., dated the 23rd October, 1942. They were forwarded to the Executive Engineer, Electrical Division, on the 2nd October, 1942, as they complained of insufficient lighting arrangements. The Executive Engineer inspected the lighting arrangements and submitted an estimate for additional lighting points. The work has since been put through. The other grievances stated in these petitions and in that, addressed to the Superintendent of the Jail, were on some vague points and were attended to by the Superintendent personally.

(*d*) and (*e*) Do not arise.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: With reference to the last portion of the answer (*b*) and (*c*), namely, "the other grievances stated in these petitions and in that, addressed to the Superintendent of the Jail, were on some vague points", will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what were the points raised in those petitions?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: They were not absolutely explicit, but one of them was that they wanted an interview with the Hon'ble Chief Minister.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Was that the only point that was raised in those petitions?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That was one of the points.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: What were the other points?

Mr. SPEAKER: He has already answered that they were not absolutely explicit.

Removal of civil, criminal and revenue courts of Comilla.

***132. Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that—

(*i*) the civil, criminal and most of the revenue courts of the town of Comilla have been shifted to the three places, viz., Brahmanbaria, Pachimgaon and Barkamta;

(*ii*) many houses of the town of Comilla belonging to the pleaders, muktears and other official and non-official gentlemen have been temporarily acquired by the Government under rule 75A of the Defence of India Rules;

(*iii*) many pleaders and muktears on account of the shifting of the courts had to leave the town of Comilla and they had been provided in *kutcha* bamboo-roofed huts temporarily constructed by the Government for which they have been required to pay monthly rents varying from Rs.8 to Rs.40 according to the size of the houses?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) (*i*) and (*ii*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether any monthly rents have been fixed for the houses acquired;

(*ii*) if so, what was the basis applied for fixing the rents;

(*iii*) when the rents had been fixed; and

(*iv*) the time when the shifting has taken place?

(*g*) Is it a fact that at the time when the houses were acquired the then District Magistrate as well as the Special Officer in charge of evacuation gave assurances that the rent would be fixed on the basis of the area of the *pucca* and *kutcha* buildings of the houses?

(*d*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether those assurances had been implemented?

(*e*) If the answer to (*d*) is in the negative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what was the reason of not giving effect to them?

MINISTER in charge of the REVENUE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Tarak Nath Mukerjea): (*a*)(*i*) Yes.

(*ii*) Yes. Some of these houses have been requisitioned on military demand. The other houses have been requisitioned at the request of the evacuees as this would entitle them to removal costs.

(*iii*) Plans of certain types of houses having rents varying from Rs.8 to Rs.40 were prepared and published, the rent for each type being shown in the plan. The evacuees were allotted the types of houses selected by them.

(*b*) (*i*) Yes.

(*ii*) The rents were fixed in accordance with the instructions issued by Government in the matter, relevant extract from which is placed on the Library Table.

(*iii*) Fixation of rents was taken up immediately after evacuation and up to date rents have been fixed in respect of 311 cases out of a total number of 329. Only 18 cases still remain pending of which 4 relate to the evacuation.

(*iv*) From the middle of October, 1943, till the beginning of December, 1943.

(*c*) No.

(*d*) and (*e*) Do not arise.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us whether the owners of houses have been consulted in the matter of fixation of rents which were based on the valuation of buildings and lands in determining the annual value of rents?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: As I have already said, rents were fixed in accordance with the instructions issued by Government in this respect.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us whether one of the instructions are that rents should be fixed on the basis of the value of the buildings and lands less depreciation?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: The rules have been strictly followed in fixing the rent.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how the value of buildings and lands have been determined without consulting the owners?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: These details it is for the local officer to decide and if the honourable member will give notice I will furnish them.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that no owner has been consulted and will the Government consider the desirability of making an enquiry into the matter of fixation of rent?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I am not aware whether the owners were actually consulted or not.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: In view of the fact that although I am the owner of a house which has been taken over I have not been consulted, do the Government consider the desirabiity of making an enquiry into the matter?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I think his case will be considered.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us how the cost of removal was determined?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: As I have already said, under the prescribed rules.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that the cost of removal was determined on the basis of the area of *pucca* or *kutcha* buildings?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I want notice.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: So far as the removal cost is concerned, is it not a fact that the cost awarded is four times in the case of *pucca* houses of the cost awarded in the case of *kutcha* houses?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: That is not actually the case. Each case is considered on its own merits.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the remedy to the proprietor who feels aggrieved by the fixation of rent made by the local authorities?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I believe he should apply to the Collector and then to the Revenue Department.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: With reference to the answer that each case is considered on its own merits, is the Hon'ble Minister aware that actually the removal cost that is given is four times in the case of *pucca* houses of that given in the case of *kutcha* houses?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Rules are always observed in granting such costs.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: Is the Hon'ble Minister in a position to deny that the removal cost given is four times in the case of *pucca* houses of that given in the case *kutcha* houses?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I am not aware of that.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the value of furniture in *kutcha* houses may be greater in some cases than that of furniture in *pucca* houses?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I am not aware of that.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that so far as the removal cost is concerned, Government has shown a special favour to those persons who own *pucca* houses?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Grant of extension to clerks of Alipore Collectorate.

***133. Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that Mr. Basak, the then District Magistrate of 24-Parganas, in granting extension to one Babu Kalipada Brahmo, a clerk of the Alipore Collectorate, ordered that no further extension would be granted to that clerk?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether another extension has recently been granted to the said clerk and, if so, on what grounds?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that no extension to any Muslim clerk in the Alipore Collectorate has been given by the present District Magistrate? If not, why not?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) Yes, but when Mr. Basak's orders were brought to the notice of the present District Magistrate, the orders granting further extension were cancelled before the clerk could enjoy the same.

(*c*) Only one Muslim clerk was due to retire, but his record of service was not such as to justify his continuance in service after the age normally fixed for retirement

Grant of pension to the family of late Sashi Kumar Charami of Chaulakathi in Barisal.

***134. Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that—

(*i*) in October, 1942, a daring dacoity was perpetrated at Chaulakathi, police-station Banaripara, district Barisal, at the house of one Shashi Kumar Bhuia;

(*ii*) on hearing hue and cry some members of the village defence party faced the dacoits;

(*iii*) one Shashi Kumar Gharami, a member of the village defence party, lost his life in the scuffle with the dacoits;

(*iv*) aged mother, widowed wife and an imbecile brother were his dependants before his death;

(*v*) by his death the whole family have been reduced to a state of poverty;

(*vi*) the Superintendent of Police of Barisal visited Chaulakathi, paid Rs.10 to the bereaved family, and promised a suitable allowance for the family;

(*vii*) in reply to their repeated prayers they have been given only oral assurances; and

(*viii*) the family have not yet received any allowance?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he is considering the desirability of granting a suitable allowance for the family?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): On the night of 9th November, 1942, a dacoity was committed in the house of one Sashi Kumar Saha and on hearing the alarm Sashi Kumar Gharami collected some other persons and faced the dacoits who murdered him. The deceased left behind his mother and widow who were dependent on him and to each of whom a compassionate pension of Rs. 10 a month has been sanctioned by Government with effect from the 10th November, 1942, the date following that of Sashi Kumar Gharami's death.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether in view of the abnormal rise in the price of foodstuffs and cloths, Government is considering the desirability of increasing the allowance?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Government have practically granted Rs. 20 a month—Rs. 10 to the mother and Rs. 10 to the widow.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that Sashi Kumar Gharami who was murdered has also a brother who is an imbecile to support?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That question has already been replied—Government have no information.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when this allowance has been sanctioned by Government?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That has also been answered—with effect from the date following his death.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: I want to know when the allowance has been sanctioned.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Theft and burglary at Senhati in Khulna.

***135. Mr. J. N. GUPTA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that there were searches in the Senhati village in the district of Khulna by police officers of Doulatpur thana in the month of August, 1943?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) whether any stolen articles were found in the search;

(*ii*) if so, what were the articles; and

(*iii*) how they were disposed of?

(*c*) Is it a fact that—

(*i*) some stolen articles were found in the houses of Girindra Nath Pal and Atul Chandra Das;

(*ii*) Girindra Nath Pal is the captain of the Senhati Defence Party;

(*iii*) just after the search Atul Chandra Das absconded; and

(*iv*) Girindra Nath Pal was on a previous occasion suspected in a theft case?

(*d*) Is it a fact that the police officer did not prosecute all the men involved in the theft cases which led him to make searches?

(*e*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the names of the persons who were under arrest after the search in the month of August, 1943?

(*f*) Is it a fact that almost every night thefts or burglaries are being perpetrated in the Senhati village?

(*g*) If the answer to (*f*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether steps have been taken by Police for detection?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) No.

(*b*), (*c*), (*i*), (*iii*) and (*iv*), (*d*) and (*e*) Do not arise.

(*c*) (*ii*) and (*g*) Yes.

(*f*) There have been several cases of theft and burglary in this locality.

Family allowance to security prisoner Mr. Rabindra Nath Sikdar.

***136. Babu KHAGENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state whether the security prisoner, Mr. Rabindra Nath Sikdar, now detained in the Rajshahi Central Jail, has been granted any allowance for the maintenance of his family?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the negative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) the reason therefor; and

(*ii*) whether he was an earning member of his family before his arrest?

(*c*) Are the Government considering the desirability of reviewing his case and granting him suitable family allowance?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) No.

(*b*)(*i*) The security prisoner has no wife or issue and had no dependants. The income of the elder brother from landed properties and business is adequate for support of the family.

(*ii*) Yes.

(*c*) No.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: In view of his answer (*b*)(*ii*) "Yes" and in view of the Government policy in regard to the granting of allowances, viz., if anybody be prevented from earning by his detention, he will be granted an allowance, does the Hon'ble Minister think it desirable to review this case and grant him an allowance as his family has been deprived of his earning?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The family was not dependant on his earning. Though he was an earning member, his elder brother earns about Rs. 200 per month from his cabinet business and Rs. 70 a month as house rent in addition to Rs. 1,000 per year as income from the landed properties.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell the House whether the prisoner himself earned any money for the family?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That question has been replied. He did earn money.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Will the Hon'ble Minister tell the House whether by imprisoning him the family is not deprived of that earning?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is not the policy of the Government that where a family is deprived of the income of an earning member, Government grant family allowances by considering the expenses of the family as well as the income?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I have already replied that the family is in no way in distress because the earning of the family is quite sufficient to meet their expenses; besides, the security prisoner had no wife or issue.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(answers to which were laid on the table)

Number of inhabitants of the province of Orissa detained as security prisoners in Bengal.

59. Mr. SATYAPRIYA BANERJEE: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state the number of security prisoners, whether inhabitants of, or domiciled in, the province of Orissa now detained in Bengal Jail?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether—

(*i*) two such security prisoners, Sj. Sriharsa Misra, an inhabitant of Orissa, and Sj. Amarnath Chatterjee, domiciled in Orissa, are now lodged in Dum Dum Central Jail; and

(*ii*) any or both of them has or have applied for the grant of family allowance and transfer to his or their own province, viz., Orissa?

(*c*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what action has been taken with regard to those petitions?

(*d*) Is it a fact that—

(*i*) they are not supplied with any Oriya newspaper; and

(*ii*) the Oriya newspaper *Utkal Deepika* approved and entered in the list of newspapers under the Bengal Security Prisoners' Rules, 1940, has ceased to be published long ago?

(*e*) If so, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of supplying them with another Oriya newspaper?

(*f*) Is it a fact that—

(*i*) Sj. Sriharsa Misra applied for the supply of the organ of the Orissa National War Front at Government cost in November, 1942; and

(*ii*) no reply has yet been vouchsafed to him in this regard?

MINISTER in charge of the HOME DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) Three.

(*b*) (*i*) Yes.

(*ii*) Yes, except that no petitions have been received from Babu Amarnath Chatterjee praying for the grant of family allowance.

(*c*) The wife and mother of Babu Sriharsa Misra have each been granted an allowance.

The prayer of both of them for transfer has been rejected.

(*d*) Yes.

(*e*) The matter is under consideration.

(*f*) I have no information.

Mr. SUKUMAR DUTTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is his decision for the transfer of the prisoner Sriharsa Misra to his own province?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: That has been rejected by Government.

Mr. SUKUMAR DUTTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister please state why his application has been rejected?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: It is not in the public interest to disclose the reasons.

A certain book "One World" by Mr. Wendell Willkie.

60. Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Publicity Department be pleased to state whether—

(*i*) Mr. Wendell Willkie's recent book "One World" has been made available to him so that he may have a scientific background and correct perspective of publicity work; and

(*ii*) the said book is now or has ever been available in Bengal?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*)(*ii*) is in the negative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reasons thereof?

(*c*) Is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of taking steps to make the book available to the reading public in Bengal so that they may judge for themselves Bengal's position in the coming world reconstruction?

MINISTER in charge of the PUBLICITY DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Pulin Behari Mullick): (*a*)(*i*) I have not seen the book.

(*ii*) I understand a limited number of copies was received by certain book-sellers and quickly sold out.

(*b*) Does not arise.

(*c*) No.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister consider the desirability of procuring a copy of the book and read it thoroughly?

The Hon'ble Mr. PULIN BEHARI MULLICK: I have nothing more to add. The answer is already there.

Adjournment motion.

Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: Mr. Speaker, I have already given notice——

Mr. SPEAKER: There is one thing, Mr. Roy. I think you have got my consent and I have stated definitely that if you agree to move it tomorrow, then I will allow it, otherwise not.

Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: If urgency is waived——

Mr. SPEAKER: I am prepared to waive it.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: What is suggested is that after leave of the House——

Mr. SPEAKER: You mean to say that leave of the House should be taken today and the discussion may be taken up tomorrow.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes, Sir.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: If Government objects, otherwise not.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: On a point of order, Sir. would like to point out that Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee in his speech during the budget debate discussed this question.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: No, Sir, I did not.

Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: I am afraid the Hon'ble the Leader of the House interrupted me while I was continuing.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let me understand the position. Perhaps there is some confusion about the matter in my mind itself. I will make my position quite clear. There is some matter on the agenda today which, to my mind appears to be a demand for grant though there is some doubt with regard to that matter even. The present matter came up to me when the bell was ringing. I could not make up my mind within the short time. I thought this a doubtful affair. So, what I have ordered is that the motion may be allowed to be moved tomorrow only to suit my convenience. If any technical objection is raised regarding its discussion tomorrow, of course, I am here. So I am asking you not to move it today.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: If you waive the urgency.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already said that. You move it tomorrow and the matter will be taken up tomorrow. That will be best.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: So far as the objection of Sir Nazimuddin is concerned, you have ruled it out.

Mr. SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, so far as the objection of Sir Nazimuddin is concerned, I have not even heard it. How can I give my decision? I will hear his objection tomorrow and I will give my decision tomorrow but so far as the question of urgency is concerned, it is entirely my concern

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: What this House has actually been given an impression of was that the proposal of my Leader to move an adjournment motion on the banning of a statement issued by the Party Leaders on the food situation could not be taken up because Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee had previously discussed something about it.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not before the House. I am not listening to that matter now.

Messages from the Bengal Legislative Council.

Secretary then read the following messages:—

"That the concurrence of the Bengal Legislative Assembly be asked to the Bengal Non-Agricultural Tenancy (Temporary Provisions) Extending Bill, 1944, as passed by the Bengal Legislative Council at its meeting held on the 17th February, 1944."

"That the concurrence of the Bengal Legislative Assembly be asked to the Coroners and Criminal Procedure (Bengal Amendment) Bill, 1944, as passed by the Bengal Legislative Council at its meeting held on the 24th February, 1944."

Report of the Public Accounts Committee.

Mr. SPEAKER: Does any member want to speak on the Public Accounts Committee Report?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes, Sir. I was wondering if the discussion on the Public Accounts Committee Report should be initiated by the Hon'ble Minister in charge and therefore, Sir, I was just waiting to find whether the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Public Finance would first lend me his ears or his inimitable voice to this House by giving us a lead in the matter of discussion. But in view of the attitude shown, I feel that it is no use waiting for his lead.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: On a point of order, Sir. I have not shown any particular attitude.

Mr. SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal has not cast any reflection on you.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Sir, there were some inaudible remarks made by Mr. Goswami——

Mr. SPEAKER: He did not make any reflection on anybody.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Reflection or deflection—what was it?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Dr. Sanyal said: "in view of the attitude I took up". But I took up no particular attitude.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: An attitude of complete indifference towards what is happening in this House.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: That is an untruthful statement.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, the House generally has little opportunity to know how recklessly certain departments of Government deal with the amounts placed at their disposal and how in many cases canons of finance are violated. It is only after the lapse of 1 or 2 years when the

expenses are incurred that accounts are placed before the Public Accounts Committee.

Sir, I feel it therefore my duty to invite the attention of this House to certain things that have been revealed in the course of our discussions. The details of the Report are available to the members, and I am sure many of them would find that an interesting reading.

I shall now invite the attention of the House to certain important matters both of procedure as well as of facts.

The first thing that strikes me and which I want you and this House to take notice of is the manner in which the work of the Public Accounts Committee is being conducted. So far as I can see, Sir, the Public Accounts Committee is a committee of this legislature. It is a committee created by rules and yet the work of this committee is conducted by the Finance Department and not by the Assembly Department.

Sir, I do not want to speak any more.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Sir, the question may now be put.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is only for general discussion. It is not a question of putting to the House. We will now proceed with the next business on the agenda.

EXCESS GRANT, 1941-42.

"10—Forest".

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Sir, I beg to move that on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor an excess grant of Rs. 1,83,350 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure in excess of the voted grant in the year 1941-42 under the major head "10—Forest".

Mr. SPEAKER: The question before the House is that——

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Sir, I want to speak.

Mr. SPEAKER: Khan Bahadur, the Hon'ble Minister has spoken. It is not necessary for you to speak.

Point of Order.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: On a point of order, Sir. When a motion is moved, that motion is open to discussion, and as a matter of fact one member from this side of the House got up to speak. We hope that he should be allowed to speak. Sir, it does not necessarily mean that the members from the Opposition are the only people who can speak——

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: On a point of order upon the Hon'ble Minister's making this statement. Sir, this has been the inviolable practice of this House that when the Speaker puts a motion, no point of order should be allowed to be raised.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let me hear him first. Yes, Sir Nazimuddin.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I maintain, Sir, that once a motion is moved it is open to discussion from both sides of the House

and it is not only the Opposition who have got the right to speak, but also the members from this side of the House who have the right to speak. I would request you to consider this point. What happened is this. Even the fact that the discussion on the Public Accounts Committee Report had terminated was not known. Abruptly Dr. Sanyal sat down, and you, Sir, called upon the Hon'ble Minister to move the motion for excess grant and one member from this side wanted to discuss the Public Accounts Committee.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That is not a fact.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: How can that be so? Dr. Sanyal refused to proceed further with his speech and most of the criticisms related to the time when his party was in office.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That is absolutely a lie. My party was never in office——

Mr. SPEAKER: The word lie is unparliamentary.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: All right; that is incorrect.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Sir, please put the motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Sanyal, I quite understand the situation and I am listening to the point of order raised by Sir Nazimuddin. His point of order is whether I should permit Khan Bahadur Mohammed Ali to speak or not. That is the real point.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: Sir, the Leader of the House is speaking for the purpose of gaining time, so that Mr. Speaker who had stood in his seat to put the question may not do so. Is that a point of order?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: We have got our men who want to speak on the motion before it is put——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That is an invention.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: That is opposed to facts

(Interruption.)

Mr. SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: My point of order is this. We have a right to speak on the motion and therefore our members should be given an opportunity to speak.

Mr. SPEAKER: My difficulty in this respect is apparent on the face of it. The report of the Public Accounts Committee was open to discussion. I invited discusion. Well, Dr. Sanyal wanted to speak. He went on speaking for some time, but it appeared to me that even at that stage he was not quite relevant. Even if he had proceeded further in that way I would not have most probably allowed him. When Dr. Sanyal sat down all of a sudden I enquired if anybody else wanted to speak. Then nobody stood up and I passed on to the next item and called upon the Hon'ble Finance Minister to move his motion.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: On a point of order, Sir - - -

(Interruption.)

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Government know that they will be defeated today. Let them clear out. Nothing can save them.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Sir, are you going to help the Government to remain in office?

(Interruption.)

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: On a point of order, Sir. May I submit to you that when Dr. Sanyal sat down all on a sudden you at once without asking any of us to speak proceeded to the next item.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not correct. Will you please resume your seat? (Cries of "Obey the Chair" from the Opposition Benches.)

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Sir——

Mr. SPEAKER: If what you said was true then the Hon'ble Minister would not have had an opportunity to move his motion. But he moved and then I called upon you to speak but nobody stood up.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Sir, with all due respect to the Chair I must say that even if you have asked the Minister to move a motion and the Minister has moved it, that does not deprive any other member of this House to speak on the report of the Public Accounts Committee.

(Interruption.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Rahman, will you please sit down?

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Will you not be pleased to hear me?

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not going to allow any more discussion.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Why not, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is my ruling. (Cries of "Obey the Chair" from the Opposition Benches.)

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Sir, Nazimuddin, will you please ask your members to resume their seats? We have got to proceed with the business of the House.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: They want to raise a point of order and nothing else and it is for you to decide whether the point of order is relevant or not and you may give your ruling.

Mr. SPEAKER: My ruling is this. So far as the discussion on the report of the Public Accounts Committee was concerned it was closed. No question of reopening it possibly arises. The next question is with regard to the Excess demand. That motion was moved and I passed for sufficient time for others to speak. But nobody rose to speak.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I rose, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please sit down. You rose when I had half put the question. I am not going to allow any more discussion.

EXCESS GRANT, 1941-42.

"10—Forest."

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra Goswami that an excess grant of Rs. 1,83,350 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure in excess of the voted grant in the year 1941-42 under the major head "10—Forest", was then put and a division taken with the following result:—

AYES—76.

Abdul Aziz, Maulana Md.
Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.
Abdul Hakim, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri, Maulvi Md.
Abdul Hamid, Mr. A. M.
Abdul Karim, Mr.
Abdul Latif Biswas, Maulvi.
Abdul Motalib Malik, Dr.
Abdul Wahab Khan, Khan Bahadur.
Abdulla-Al Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. F. M.
Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, Mr.
Abdur Rasehid Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rasheed, Maulvi Md.
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Maulvi S. (Howrah.)
Abdus Shaheed, Maulvi. Md.
Abul Fazl, Mr. Md.
Abul Masud, Kazi.
Abul Quasem, Maulvi.
Afazuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Amir Ali Mia, Maulvi Md.
Barma, the Hon'ble Mr. Promhari.
Barman, Babu Shyama Prosad.
Biswas, Babu Lakshmi Narayan.
Biswas, Mr. Rasik Lal.
Chakrabarty, Babu Narendra Narayan.
Chippendale, Mr. J. W.
Das, Rai Sahib Anukul Chandra.
Das, Rai Sahib Kirit Bhusan.
Das, Mr. Monmohan.
Farhat Bano Khanam, Begum.
Fazlul Quadir, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Dacca).
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Mymensingh).
Goswami, the Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra.
Griffiths, Mr. C.
Gupta, Mr. J. N.
Hafizuddin Choudhuri, Maulvi.
Hamiduddin Ahmad, Khan Sahib.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Jalaluddin Ahmad, the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kabiruddin Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kennedy, Mr. I. G.
Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Khan Sahib Maulvi (Tippera).
Mandal, Mr. Amrita Lal.
Mandal, Mr. Banku Behari.
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra.
Mandal, the Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath.
Mandal, Mr. Krishna Prasad.
Maniruddin Akhand, Maulvi.
Mohammed Ali, Khan Bahadur.
Moslem Ali Mollah, Maulvi M.
Muhammad Abdul Halim Mollah, Mr.
Muhammad Ishaque, Maulvi.
Muhammad Israil, Maulvi.
Mukerjee, the Hon'ble Mr. Tarakanath, M.B.E.
Mullick, Mr. Mukunda Behary.
Mullick, the Hon'ble Mr. Pulin Behary.
Musharruf Hossain, the Hon'ble Nawab, Khan Bahadur.
Nasarullah, Nawabzada K.
Nazimuddin, the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir, K.C.I.E.
Pain, the Hon'ble Mr. Baroda Prosanna.
Razaur Rahman Khan, Mr.
Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Safiruddin Ahmed, Haji.
Sahebe-Alam, Mr. Syed.
Sarkar, Babu Madhusudan.
Serajul Islam, Mr.
Shahedali, Mr.
Singha, Babu Kshetra.
Sirdar, Babu Litta Munda.
Stark, Mr. A. F.
Suhrawardy, The Hon'ble Mr. H. S.
Tamizuddin Khan, the Hon'ble Mr.
Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr.

NOES—76.

Ahmad, Mr. Nia.
Ahmed, Hamid Shah, Maulvi.
Ahmed Majid, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Ahmed Wahed, Maulvi.
Abdur Razzak, Maulvi.
Acharyya Choudhury, Maharaja Sashi Kanta, of Muktagacha, Mymensingh.
Ahmed Khan, Mr. Syed.
Azimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Badi Ahmed Choudhury, Khan Bahadur Haji.
Badruddoja, Mr. Syed.
Banerjee, Mr. Pramatha Nath.
Banerji, Mr. P.
Barat Ali, Mr. Md.
Barma, Mr. Puspajit.
Barman, Mr. Upendra Nath.
Basu, Mr. Santosh Kumar.
Bose, Dr. Gobinda Chandra.
Biswas, Mr. Surendra Nath.
Chattopadhyay, Mr. Haripada.
Choudhuri, Rai Harendra Nath.
Das Gupta, Srijut Narendra Nath.
Dutta, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Dolui, Mr. Harendra Nath.
Dutta, Mr. Sukumar.
Dutta Gupta, Miss Mira.
Edber, Mr. Upendranath.
Faziul Huq, Mr. A. K.
Giasuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Golam Rabbani Ahammad, Maulvi.
Gupta, Mr. Jogesh Chandra.
Gyasuddin Ahmed Choudhury, Alhadj.
Habibullah, Nawab Bahadur K., of Dacca.
Hasan Ali Choudhury, Mr. Syed.
Hashem Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Idris Ahmed Mia, Maulvi.

Jalaluddin Hashemy, Mr. Syed.
Jonab Ali Majumdar, Maulvi.
Khan, Mr. Debendra Lall.
Kunda, Mr. Nishitha Nath.
Lahiri, Babu Ashutosh.
Maji, Mr. Adwaita Kumar.
Majumdar, Mrs. Hemaprova.
Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra.
Maqbul Hosain, Mr.
Mookerjee, Dr. Syamaprasad.
Muhammad Afzal, Khan Bahader Maulvi Syed.
Muhammad Ibrahim, Maulvi.
Muhammad Sulaiman, Khan Bahader Maulvi.
Mukherji, Mr. Dhirendra Narayan.
Mukherji, Dr. Sharat Chandra.
Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh.
Mustafa Ali Dewan, Maulvi.
Paul, Sir Hari Sankar.
Poddar, Mr. Anandilal.
Rahman, Khan Bahader A. M. L.
Rajibuddin Tarafdar, Maulvi.
Ramiruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Charu Chandra.
Roy, Mr. Kamalkrishna.
Roy, Mr. Kiran Sankar.
Roy, Mr. Manmatha Nath.
Roy, Mr. Putiram.
Sanyal, Dr. Nalinaksha.
Sanyal, Mr. Sasanka Sekhar.
Sen, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Sen, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Sen, Jogesh Chandra, Rai Bahadur.
Sen-Gupta, Mrs. Nellie.
Shamsuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khondkar, Mr.
Sinha, Srijut Manindra Bhusan.
Sur, Mr. Harendra Kumar.
Thakur, Mr. Pramatha Ranjan.
Tofel Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi Haji.
Wahar Rahman, Maulvi.
Zaman, Mr. A. M. A.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is divided: Ayes 76, Noes 76. According to the practice that is almost uniformly followed in a matter of this description I cast my vote in favour of the Ayes. The Ayes have it.

The motion was accordingly passed.

(Cries of "resign, resign" from the Opposition Benches.)

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Mr. Speaker, Sir, you have given your verdict and we cannot say anything so far as that is concerned. But I would ask you most respectfully to consider the dishonest tactics of the Government party to gain time——

(Shouts of "Objectionable", "Withdraw" from the Coalition Benches and "Resign, resign" from the Opposition Benches.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. I am sorry that there should be so much noise.

Nawabzada K. NASARULLAH: The Leader of the Opposition has used the expression "dishonest". He must withdraw it.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Sir, I said dishonest tactics in order to gain time to get their supporters.

(There was again uproarious noise in the House.)

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Has he withdrawn that remark?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please. Let me hear him.

Nawabzada K. NASARULLAH: He must withdraw the word "dishonest". Unless he withdraws the expression we won't allow him to speak.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: On a point of order——

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: I only wish it to be recorded——

(Again there was loud noise in the House.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. Mr. Huq, are you going to make a statement?

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Yes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I only want to know from you if you can postpone that till after the other items have been disposed of.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: I was only going to submit that——

Mr. SPEAKER: We are in the midst of a discussion on some financial matter. You will have ample time to make a statement after the other business is finished. I will allow you to make a statement. If you say that it is of such importance that it should be made here and now, then it is a different matter.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: He must withdraw that expression.

Mr. SPEAKER: He will make a statement afterwards.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: May I only ask you, Sir, to consider whether after allowing the Government to bring in the members——

Mr. SPEAKER: That is another matter.

"30—Ports and Pilotage."

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that an excess grant of Rs. 22,212 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure in excess of the voted grant in the year 1941-42 under the major head "30—Ports and Pilotage."

I need hardly say that this excess grant is merely to regularise expenditure in 1941-42. It has nothing to do with the expenditure incurred by this Government this year. It is merely to regularise the excess expenditure in 1941-42

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I have to rise to invite the attention of the House while on this demand to certain irregularities of procedure which have been adopted in obtaining the present demand for the House. This demand has emanated as a result of a report which unfortunately has not followed the regular procedure that is adopted for committees appointed by this House In all cases of committees appointed by this House, as I sought to submit to you earlier, in all committees of this House the Assembly Department is the authority, the executive office, for conducting the procedure of meetings. In this particular case, however, following some old anti-diluvian practice we were subjected to a process of meetings invited by the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Finance and by the Secretariat. While appreciating some amount of assistance that has been rendered by the Deputy Secretary of the Finance Department in the working of the committee I have to submit with all due respect that the committee's work was wholly irregular and ultra vires because it was not a committee which was attended to by the Secretary of the Assembly Department or any of his learned Assistant Secretaries. It has also been irregular because while encomiums of praise and appreciation of one or two Secretaries of the Government who appeared before the committee have been placed on record, the others who were equally helpful in the deliberations of the committee were not appreciated in the body of the report portion.

Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL: On a point of order. There was a time for discussion of the Public Accounts Committee. At that time Dr. Sanyal did not make any observation whatsoever. Now there is a definite motion before the House and he is practically discussing the report of the Public Accounts Committee.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think that debars him from making a statement here.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I have already stated that my observations generally are already contained in the report and even if I do not make any statement today, they are there available for the members. So far as this particular demand on the excess on account of Ports and Pilotages is concerned, as a member of that Public Accounts Committee, I have approved of this demand being placed before this House. That was because the circumstances under which this excess was incurred was practically beyond our control. The Reports of the Public Accounts Committee are made available very late after the whole mischief is done and one has a Hobson's choice. In other democratic legislative institutions parallel with the Public Accounts Committee, there is always functioning a Finance Committee. In our unfortunate Province, however, there is no Finance Committee as such constituted, nor, Sir, is the Public Accounts Committee given the right and privilege to examine current accounts and go on from time to time with the recommendations regarding the same. Therefore when this demand came to us—a demand relating to an expenditure incurred in the year 1941-42, we had no other alternative than to accept the proposal for regularising the demand. I submit that it ought to have been better for the Government and I suppose the House would also appreciate if the Government either constitute a Finance Committee as there is in the Central Legislature or utilise the services of the Public Accounts Committee which is a duly elected representative body of this Legislature for the same purpose as the Finance Committee normally serves.

It is extremely unfortunate, and this I had occasion to point out on occasions more than one, that supplementary demands are presented very late in the year and this matter also has been pointed out in the Committee's report. I submit, Sir, that the Government would be well advised to revise their present policy and procedure in this respect. With these words, Sir, I ask this House to carefully consider the position and the privilege of this House while they are examining the motion of the Hon'ble Minister in charge.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Sir, I was rather upset this evening by the speech just delivered by the honourable member for the Municipalities of Murshidabad. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: No, no. Presidency Division Municipalities.) (Laughter.) I was hoping that after the excitement we saw a few minutes ago he would go into ecstasies and oppose item No. 2 which is under discussion but he realises that opposition, to a matter of a technical character especially when it is submitted to the House in the lifeless manner in which he has done it, can be characterised as nothing to reconsider certain methods of how matters should be brought forward before the House and what steps it should take to see that accounts of our revenue and expenditure are kept on a scientific basis. I would like to inform the gentlemen opposite, through you, Sir, that this is a post-mortem item. If the dates are seen by the gentlemen who are gloating over a situation which has upset them so much they will realise that the item we are discussing is one for which they are responsible. (Dr. NALINAKSHA

SANYAL: No, no.) You will recall, Sir, that there was a change of Government somewhere about November, 1941. The Hon'ble the Leader of the Opposition was in charge of the maladministration of Bengal for 16 months. His colleague, his mentor, censor or master, whatever he chooses to call him, the honourable member for the University of Calcutta was Finance Minister for about 12 months out of those sixteen. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: No; three months.)

This item, Sir, for the sake of clarification, may be called an item of the year of grace 1942. The honourable member for the Municipalities of Murshidabad arrogates to himself almost omniscience on points of figures, statistics and arithmetic. He knows that when accounts are submitted, the Accountant-General and the auditors find more than one mistake in the final sheets. He knows as well as I know that in the Corporation, in the Calcutta Improvement Trust and not only in this Government but in every Government objections are raised to expenditure which does not come within the steel frame of the accountancy code. It takes time; explanations go from one party to another until a final decision is arrived at. This, Sir, is a formality that is known to every man of business or even to any man who possesses the least little bit of commonsense.

Rs. 22,212 was needed in 1941-42, when the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition was responsible for the destinies of Bengal, for the repairs of a steam launch which had foundered in a cyclone. Now, Sir, you could not repair that steam launch by switching off an electric button. It took time. Estimates had to be prepared and final accounts submitted. Again under the strict rules of accountancy, the auditors demanded that this should be put right and that should be put right What the Hon'ble the Finance Minister is doing is the rectification of a mistake among many mistakes they committed while in office which we are still trying to rectify and, I have every hope that we shall succeed in doing so. This Rs. 22,212 will not help any one, because the money has been spent and the steam launch "Anne" has been repaired and perhaps is doing duty. Why create a discussion on an item of this nature? I will therefore follow in the footsteps of the honourable member for the Municipalities of Murshidabad and ask the gentlemen sitting opposite, through you, Sir, to reconsider and revise their views not only on this item but about the type of opposition they should place before the House. I feel that we are going down and down (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: To the abyss.) and unless the Opposition realises its duty by this House we shall be in a muddle of a type over which all your efforts and all the efforts of this side of the House which wants to bring dignity and honour to the House will fail I would therefore request the House through you to allow this item—a post-mortem item—to pass without a division.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra Goswami that an excess grant of Rs. 22,212 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure in excess of the voted grant in the year 1941-42 under the major head "30—Ports and Pilotage" was then put and agreed to.

"Interest Free Advances."

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that an excess

grant of Rs. 3,35,043 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure in excess of the voted grant in the year 1941-42 under the major head "Interest Free Advances".

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on this demand I have only a small submisison to make and I shall not take much time in my observations. On page 2 of the report, paragraph 9, we had invited the attention of the Legislature to the continued deterioration in the general financial position of the Province accentuated by emergent conditions arising out of the war and we had noticed that this continuity had been going on for some years past. It may be found in the body of the report that we hoped that Government would take some active measures to review the position properly and it was my humble suggestion that there should be an impartial expert enquiry into the whole circumstances to enable Government to move on right lines in meeting the situation that has arisen out of the war emergency. Sir, we were then summarily informed that the Government was doing every thing possible and that the Agricultural Income-tax Bill was one of the measures contemplated by Government for meeting the situation. These interest free advances were necessary at the close of the year for enabling members of the families of Government servants to remove themselves from emergency areas towards the end of the financial year. Such emergencies should not have been entirely unforeseen. As a matter of fact there had been this threat of Japanese bombardment and invasion for some time past before the period and in fact Calcutta was bombed in the month of December, 1942, and non-family area was declared by Government about two or three months earlier than this time. I do not want to contend that the Finance Department had time enough to put up a supplementary budget, but I feel that the manner in which expenditure for emergent purposes was being provided requires scrutiny. We have large advances given under the new capital head "85-A", and many of us know that in the name of emergency all sins of omission and commission are kept back from the public. We are not sure if the amount so provided is properly utilised and I would implore Government to set up some machinery to see that there is no extravagance, no wastefulness and no unnecessary burden on the finances of this Province thrown because of panic and panicky measures adopted during the emergency.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra Goswami that an excess grant of Rs. 3,35,043 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure in excess of the voted grant in the year 1941-42 under the major head "Interest Free Advances" was then put and agreed to.

Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned at 4-55 p.m. till 3-30 p.m. on Thursday, the 2nd of March, 1944, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Thursday, the 2nd March, 1944, at 3-30 p.m.

Present:

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI) in the Chair, 12 Hon'ble Ministers and 181 members.

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Air-raid protection for security prisoners in jails within Calcutta area.

*137. **Mr. PRATUL CHANDRA GANGULI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state the arrangements that have been made for the protection of security prisoners and convicted and undertrial political prisoners lodged in the Dum Dum, Presidency and Alipore Central Jails within Calcutta area?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): These jails have been furnished with complete fire-fighting appliances and first-aid accessories. The Jail A.R.P. personnel have been thoroughly trained. Baffle walls have also been erected round the wards of these jails as far as possible, but in spite of best efforts the work could not be finished in the case of a few more buildings for difficulty in getting bricks and building materials during this emergency.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: When the Government refer to difficulty in getting bricks and building materials, do I understand that bricks are costly or not available?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The bricks that are available have been requisitioned for essential work, that is, military work, but some supply of bricks was obtained and a part of the work has been completed.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what are the arrangements for quickly bringing down the prisoners who live in the upper storey to the ground floor when the siren goes?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Instructions have been issued to the Superintendents of these jails that the prisoners in these jails who live in the upper storey should be brought down to the ground floor where baffle walls have been constructed.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government have consulted experts and taken their advice for the introduction of an automatic device by which in cases of emergency of this character locks may open mechanically?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if there is anything like a refuge room in these jails, as required under the rules?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: As I have already said, in the ground floor windows and doors have been protected by baffle walls and the rooms there, for all intents and purposes, are shelter rooms.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that their advice to Superintendents that prisoners in the upper storey should be brought down to the ground floor when the siren goes, is never carried out in the Alipore Central Jail?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I am not aware of it.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that on two occasions, in the Alipore Central Jail the lights were not put out when the siren went and the prisoners complained to the Superintendent therefor but no action was taken?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I am not aware of that.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that a number of security prisoners who were comfortably lodged in jails outside the emergency area of Calcutta have recently been brought down to Calcutta and placed in the Dum Dum Central Jail or in the Presidency Jail?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Yes, Sir. Some security prisoners, according to the policy of centralisation, have been brought down.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is considering the desirability of removing the security prisoners as far as practicable to non-emergency areas where suitable accommodation can be arranged?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: No, Sir. Government policy is that security prisoners in sub-jails and branch jails should be centralised and brought to Central Jails.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to consider the desirability of enquiring whether security prisoners kept upstairs are brought downstairs when the siren goes?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Yes, Sir.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: With reference to his answer that in spite of best efforts the work could not be finished in the case of a few more buildings, will the Hon'ble Minister kindly tell us what steps or arrangements have been taken or made for the protection of those inmates who occupy those buildings where baffle walls could not be erected?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The constructions that have been completed are considered adequate to meet the requirements.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that in the Alipore Central Jail there is not a single baffle wall before buildings where the security prisoners are kept and also no slit trenches? Is it also a fact that when on two occasions lights in the upper storey were not put out a representation was addressed to the Hon'ble Minister in charge as a mark of protest but that representation was not forwarded?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: In the Alipore Central Jail the buildings have been strengthened and baffle walls have been constructed quite contrary to the information of the honourable member.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister kindly tell us what arrangements have been made or what steps have been taken for the protection of those prisoners who occupy those buildings which have not been protected by baffle walls or by other A.R.P. arrangements?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: It has been arranged that the prisoners will be concentrated in rooms which have been protected by baffle walls.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Sir, I am a bit disturbed in mind in connection with this question. When Government analysed the question with regard to protection, did they consider about protection against what? Sir, it may be against disease; don't you think, therefore, that the whole discussion is redundant?

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not a matter for discussion. I have seen the question. The question simply says protection but it has been interpreted by Government as protection against air-raids.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Sir, the prisoners want protection against many other things and therefore the intention of the questioner should be found out first.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think that is not necessary.

Mr. HARIPADA CHATTOPADHYAY: Will the Hon'ble Minister care to make an enquiry as to whether a petition was sent by all the security prisoners of the Alipore Central Jail after the lights on two occasions were not put out, addressed to the Hon'ble Minister in charge, but that petition was not forwarded to the proper quarters by the jail authorities?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Yes, Sir; that will be looked into.

Security prisoner Srijukta Bimal Protiva Debi.

*138. **Mr. SIBNATH BANERJEE:** (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home (Jails) Department aware that Srijukta Bimal Protiva Debi sentenced under the Defence of India Rules to twelve months' imprisonment for being in possession of a leaflet addressed to workers regarding impending war efforts is in the Presidency Jail segregated from all other prisoners?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether there is any other woman political prisoner in the Jail? If so, how many?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what measures the Government have taken for her protection against—

(*i*) "air-raids"; and

(*ii*) any internal disorder in jail as a result of such "raid"?

(*d*) Has the Hon'ble Minister received any petition from her praying for release?

(*e*) If so, what steps, if any, have been taken on the said petition?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) Srijukta Bimal Protiva Debi was sentenced to one year's

simple imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 250 in default six months' simple imprisonment in addition, under the Defence of India Rules for the possession of some objectionable documents. Since expiry of her sentence, she has been detained in the Presidency Jail as a security prisoner.

(*b*) Yes. Fourteen at present.

(*c*) The question of removing female convicts from the jail is under consideration and the particular prisoner's case will also be considered in that connection.

As regards protective measures, first-aid boxes have been distributed in all parts of the jail including the female section and baffle walls round the female Jail Hospital and the sleeping wards for female security and criminal prisoners in the jail have been constructed. In the event of any post-raid disorder in the jail, it has been arranged that the reserve of warders and the police will take over the security of prisoners in the jail.

(*d*) Yes.

(*e*) The prisoner prayed for release on the ground of liability to attack from the air, but as the honourable member will realise it is not possible for Government to show exceptional consideration to any particular prisoner on the ground stated and the Hon'ble Minister does not therefore propose to order her release on that ground.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: With reference to answer (*c*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how long has it been under the consideration of Government?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when do Government expect a decision on this question?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Very shortly.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Bimal Protiva Debi has been kept segregated from all other female political prisoners?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Sir, there is sufficient notice.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is all right. He says he wants notice. You mean to say that he ought to have given the answer because the notice is there. The remedy is in your hands and not in my hands.

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: Sir, can't you say that it is incomplete and it must go back?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is a question I will look into.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: With reference to answer (*b*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether these 14 prisoners are kept together under the same arrangement or independently of one another?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: All these 14 prisoners were kept under the Bengal Security Prisoners Rule 4 in the Presidency Jail on the same footing—same class.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: With reference to answer (*e*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government have

considered the question of the prisoners' release independently of the ground referred to?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Some prisoners' release has been considered by Government.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: On what ground?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: With reference to answer (*c*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state on what ground they considered the question of release of that particular prisoner?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Releases are considered on the merit of each individual security prisoner?

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: The Hon'ble Minister has replied that on the ground of air-attack he is not ready to consider her release. On what ground is he ready to consider her release?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The question of the release of this particular prisoner came up before the House the other day when I stated that she could not be released because of her political antecedents. Government do not consider it in public interest to release her at present.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Since it appears from answer (*a*) that this prisoner was in jail for about a year and a half before she was made a security prisoner, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what are the reasons for making her a security prisoner since she was already in jail before?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: This question was answered on the floor of the House only the other day and I may repeat again that she was first convicted to one year's simple imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 250, in default 6 months' simple imprisonment. Because she did not pay the fine, she had to undergo six months' imprisonment. She received 14 days' remission for good conduct and after the expiry of the full term, she was made a security prisoner because Government considered that in the interests of public security and safety her continued detention was necessary.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Parliamentary Secretary be pleased to state whether, having earned remission of 14 days for good conduct, the continuance of her detention was at all necessary?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Her good conduct was only within the precincts of the jail and she was a prisoner only undergoing simple imprisonment.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether after arresting her as security prisoner the charge-sheet has been placed before her?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I want notice.

Amount sanctioned and spent for test relief work in Bankura.

***139. Mr. KAMAL KRISHNA ROY:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) the amount of money that was granted for test relief work in the district of Bankura for the year 1943-44; and

(*ii*) the amount spent up to August last?

(*b*) Is it a fact that local authorities could not carry on the test relief work for want of fund?

(*c*) If the answer to (*b*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason for it?

(*d*) If the answer to (*b*) is in the negative, is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of continuing the test relief work in the district?

(*e*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to lay on the Table a statement showing from May to September last—

(*i*) the names of the thanas (police-stations) with subdivisions in which test relief work was opened;

(*ii*) the corresponding number of men that were engaged in the work;

(*iii*) the amount of money spent in tank improvement scheme during the period; and

(*iv*) the amount sanctioned for the current year?

MINISTER in charge of the REVENUE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Tarak Nath Mukerjea): (*a*)(*i*) Rs. 3,49,365.

(*ii*) Rs.1,21,497.

(*b*) No.

(*c*) Does not arise.

(*d*) Test relief work was continued in the district up to the middle of July, 1943, and for the period from 14th August, 1943, to 1st December, 1943.

(*e*) (*i*) Sadar subdivision—All thanas; Vishnupur subdivision—Thanas Joypur, Sonamukhi and Patrasayer.

(*ii*) About 4½ lakhs of units.

(*iii*) Rs.66,000.

(*iv*) Rs.1,20,000.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: With reference to answer (*e*)(*ii*)—about 4½ lakhs of units—will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the number of people that each unit is composed of?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA? 4½ lakhs of people including male and female.

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: With reference to answer (*a*)(*i*) will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how much of this amount was actually spent?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Rs. 3,48,253.

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: With reference to answer (*d*) that test relief work was continued in the district up to the middle of July, 1943, and for the period from 14th August, 1943, to 1st December, 1943, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why test relief work was suspended from the middle of July up to the middle of August?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Owing to rains no test relief work could be carried on.

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: Is it not a fact that monsoon continued after August also?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: May be, but it was possible to go on with test relief work.

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: Is it not due to the fact that there was paucity of funds?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: It is not a fact.

Mr. KAMAL KRISHNA ROY: With reference to answer (*a*)(*i*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when the amount was sanctioned?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: It was sanctioned from time to time as the requisition came from the Collector.

Mr. KAMAL KRISHNA ROY: How much was sanctioned before the 15th July?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I want notice.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what was the rate of wage of each labourer a day?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: The rate was different according to the price of rice prevailing at particular times.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: What was the rate at the time when the price was soaring very high?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: That I cannot say off-hand. I want notice.

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any part of the amount of Rs. 3,49,365 was spent on account of tank improvement?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: A portion of that was spent. I cannot give you the exact figure.

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that the test work which was done on roads was not done satisfactorily?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: We have got no such information.

Opening of gruel kitchens in Bogra district.

***140. Maulvi RAJIBUDDIN TARAFDAR:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) how many gruel kitchens were started in the district of Bogra during the year 1943;

(*ii*) how many destitutes took gruel from the said kitchens; and

(*iii*) in how many unions of the said district gruel kitchens were not started?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any people died of starvation in the unions where gruel kitchens were not opened?

(*c*) If so, how many deaths were reported due to starvation?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: (*a*) (*i*) 26. (*ii*) 16,987. (*iii*) 106.

(*b*) and (*c*) Altogether 44 deaths from starvation were reported from all over the district.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: On a point of order, Sir, on this question. The Hon'ble Minister for Local Self-Government and Public Health Department only the other day in reply to a question said that Government had

not so far maintained any register showing the number of deaths arising from starvation and Government could not supply any statistics. Now, in answer to this question Government give a definite information that 44 deaths from starvation were reported from all over the district. My submission is that when the Hon'ble Minister for the Local Self-Government replied he replied for the whole Government.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is no point of order. Will you please resume your seat?

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us if there is any column in the Chaukidar's Report showing that there have been deaths from starvation?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I am not aware of that.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Is the Government aware that it was replied by Government that there was no column in the Chaukidar's Report showing deaths from starvation separately?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: That may be.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the source of Government's information when they say only 44 deaths were reported from Bogra?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: The report received from the local officers.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: In view of the answer that there was no column in the Chaukidar's Report showing deaths from starvation, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how can Government say that there were only 44 deaths from starvation?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: That is the report that I have just received from the local officers.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: In view of the report of deaths from all over the district, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why Government did not start free gruel kitchens all over the district and in each union?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Because it was not considered necessary by the local officers in charge.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Was it the then policy of Government to start free gruel kitchens in all unions which were affected by famine?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: The policy was to start kitchens in those unions which were affected by famine, and probably the gruel kitchens were not started in those unions where the local officers did not consider that gruel kitchens were necessary.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: From answer (*c*) it appears that Government was in possession of the information with regard to deaths all over the district. My question is why were not gruel kitchens started in those unions from where deaths from starvation were reported?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS: With reference to answer (*b*) and (*e*) will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how many of these 44 deaths occurred in unions where no gruel kitchens were opened?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I cannot say off-hand. I want notice.

Babu MADHUSUDAN SARKAR: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the period when these 44 deaths took place?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: During the year 1943.

Mr. A. F. STARK: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state by what method the local officers collected the information that 44 deaths were due to starvation?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: That is a matter concerning the Local Self-Government Department. So far as my information goes, it is this: that the Chaukidars report to the union board president and the president sends the report to the Subdivisional Officer and the District Health Officer.

Babu MADHUSUDAN SARKAR: In view of the answer given by the Hon'ble Minister, will he be pleased to state if it is a fact that the chaukidars always do not give or cannot give correct figures?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether in the Publicity and Information Department, which is a particular portfolio of Government, there is any method or system of noting down deaths due to starvation in respect of each of the districts including Bogra?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I am not aware of it.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the chaukidars have any record to show the number of deaths stated in the answer?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is going too far into details.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: The Hon'ble Minister has not answered question (*b*). Will he be pleased to answer question (*b*)?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: There is nothing further to add to what I have already said.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: In view of the fact that the Hon'ble Minister has given an answer which is diametrically opposite to the information given by another Minister, will the Government consider the desirability of sending back the question and the answer that have been given today to the department concerned for further ascertainment of facts?

Mr. SPEAKER: You are referring to facts which are not before me now.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Any way the Hon'ble Minister has given an answer which is proved to be diametrically opposite to the answer given by another Minister. My question is: will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to consider the desirability of sending the question and

answer including the supplementaries to the department concerned for further elucidation of actual facts?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I am prepared to send a copy to the Local Self-Government Department.

Mr. A. F. STARK: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if any special steps are being taken to check the reports of the chaukidars as regards deaths due to starvation?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: The matter relates to the Local Self-Government Department.

Babu NARENDRA NARAYAN CHAKRABARTY: Sir, বাংলা দেশের বর্ত্তমান দুর্ভিক্ষ ও দুর্দ্দশার কথা বিবেচনা করে মাননীয় মন্ত্রীমহাশয় কি চৌকীদারদের দ্বারা মৃত্যু-বিবরণ সংগ্রহ না করে অন্য উপায়ে মৃত্যুর বিবরণ সংগ্রহ করবার উপায় নির্দ্ধারণ করবেন?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: আমি যতটা অবগত আছি এ বিষয়টা হচ্ছে স্বায়ত্তশাসন বিভাগের কর্ত্তব্য।

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware of the fact that the number of deaths as reported by the chaukidars due to starvation are always reduced by the thana people?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I am not aware.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell the House whether he consulted the honourable member representing Bogra about deaths from starvation from that district?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he is considering the desirability of giving correct statistics as to how many deaths occurred due to starvation in those unions where gruel kitchens were not opened?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I want notice.

Mr. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that thana officers generally rebuke the chaukidars when they bring in reports of death due to starvation?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Extension of service granted to clerks of Alipore Collectorate.

***141. Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that extensions are being granted by the present District Magistrate of 24-Parganas in the Alipore Collectorate to the Hindu assistants only?

(*b*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason thereof?

(*c*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that a strong feeling of resentment is prevailing among the Muslims for giving extensions to Hindus only?

(*d*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, do the Government propose to make an enquiry into the matter?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: (*a*) and (*b*) Extension of service is granted only when it is considered essential in the interest of public service to avail of the experience of an exceptionally capable officer

who would otherwise retire. Extensions are not granted on communal grounds.

Of the six clerks who were due to retire during the current year, three Hindus and one Muslim were refused any extension of service. Two clerks, who were given extension, were Hindus.

(*c*) No.

(*d*) In view of what is stated in answer to (*a*) an enquiry is hardly called for.

Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state who were those two Hindu clerks who were granted extensions?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I want notice.

Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL: With reference to answer (*a*) and (*b*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state who considered the essential necessity of extensions in cases of persons whose terms of the office expired?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: It is generally done by the Collector.

Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any extensions previous to this were granted to any of these two Hindu clerks who have been granted extensions?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I want notice.

Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether these extensions were granted on any representation given to the Collector or *suo motu*?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: I am not aware.

Khan Bahadur Maulvi JASIMUDDIN AHMED: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that extensions are refused on communal grounds?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: No, Sir.

Babu MADHUSUDAN SARKAR: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is the general view of this House that every officer should retire just at the age of 55 or after 25 years' of service whichever is earlier?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Yes, Sir.

Khan Bahadur Maulvi SYED MUHAMMAD AFZAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us whether he was informed of any proposal of extension before it was actually granted?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: No, Sir, so far as clerks are concerned.

Maulvi AHMED ALI MRIDHA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he will consider the desirability of holding an enquiry to see if the extension was granted to the two clerks on communal grounds in this particular case?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: No.

Khan Bahadur Maulvi SYED MUHAMMAD AFZAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if the question of efficiency is considered on communal grounds?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: No, Sir.

Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what were the special grounds for granting extensions to these two Hindu clerks?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: They were considered essential in the interests of public service.

Temporary upper division posts created in the Finance Department.

***142. Maulvi Md. ABDUL HAKIM VIKRAMPURI:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Finance Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) how many temporary posts in the upper division were created in the department during the period from 1931 to 1943 for special works, such as revision of pay scales, investigation of taxation measures, A.R.P. works, etc.; and

(*b*) how many of these posts were held by Muslims?

MINISTER in charge of the FINANCE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra Goswami): (*a*) Since 1st April, 1937, five temporary posts in the upper division have been created for such special work.

(*b*) None.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why no Muslim was appointed to any of these 5 posts in the upper division since 1937 to 1943?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: These posts were filled by people with knowledge of a special kind and 4 appointments were made in September, 1937, and the 5th one in February, 1942. On the whole five appointments were made between September, 1937, and February, 1942.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: We want to know the reason why no Muslim was found to fill any of these 5 posts?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: I am not in a position to answer that question because I have nothing on record here to show why Muslims were not appointed, but I take it as these were for special work special qualifications were considered.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state in which particular year these five posts were filled up?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: As I have already stated, the first four of these five posts were filled up in September, 1937, and the 5th in February, 1942.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state why figures were not supplied for the period from 1931 to 1936?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: I have given you figures from as far back as I can give, i.e., from the 1st April, 1937.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: Can we take it that Government lost all those papers?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Government have not lost those papers but it would require a considerable amount of research work to get at the figures for earlier years.

Mr. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that some 10 or 12 more persons were taken from 1931 who were all non-Muslims?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: As I have stated only five temporary posts were created.

Mr. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what was the special knowledge required in the case of these posts?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: It is very difficult for me to answer that question off-hand because it is now more than 6 years since four of the five appointments were made.

Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he has made any attempt to secure any qualified Muslims with special knowledge by advertisement in the papers?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: As I have told you the appointments were made long before my time and I am not in a position to answer that question.

Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether in view of his answer regarding the period between 1931 and 1936 he will hold an enquiry and take necessary action?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: If you will kindly give notice of a fresh question I will certainly endeavour to answer it.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(answers to which were laid on the table)

Chakaria Sub-Registry Office.

61. Khan Bahadur HAJI BADI AHMAD CHOUDHURY: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Education Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) in which year the Chakaria Sub-Registry Office was a joint office with the Cox's Bazar Sub-Registry Office in the Chittagong district;

(*ii*) why these were made joint offices; and

(*iii*) what is the reason of their being separated at present?

(*b*) Is the Hon'ble Minister considering the desirability of making these at once a Joint Registration Office as before?

MINISTER in charge of the EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Tamizuddin Khan): (*a*)(*i*) From 2nd January, 1933, to 31st March, 1939, on an experimental basis.

(*ii*) At a request of the honourable member himself.

(*iii*) The experiment was a failure. The office at Chakaria with concurrent jurisdiction with Cox's Bazar and Kutubdia worked at deficit as the registrant public found it more convenient to go to Cox's Bazar and Kutubdia than to go to Chakaria when they had the option to go to either of these three places. The office was therefore converted into an independent one as before.

(*b*) No.

Khan Bahadur Haji BADI AHMED CHOUDHURY: মাননীয় মন্ত্রীসাহেব, জানাইবেন কি আমার অনুরোধে যখন চাকারিয়া সাব-রেজেষ্টারী আফিসকে কক্সবাজারের সাব-রেজেষ্টারী আফিসের সঙ্গে joint office করিয়াছিলেন আবার আমি অনুরোধ করিতেছি স্থানীয় লোকদের সুবিধার জন্য বিশেষ করিয়া যুদ্ধক্ষেত্রস্থানীয় লোকদের উপকারার্থে তাহারা যাহাতে সুবিধামত দলিল রেজেষ্টারী করিতে পারে তাহার উপায় করিবেন কি? বিশেষ করিয়া air রেইডের জন্য লোকের যাতায়াতের আরো অসুবিধা হয়।

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Sir, I have somehow understood the question. My answer is that that is a new point raised by the honourable member which has not yet been considered by Government.

Khan Bahadur Haji BADI AHMED CHOUDHURY: মাননীয় মন্ত্রীসাহেব দয়া করিয়া বাংলায় বলুন।

আমার প্রশ্নের উত্তরে *(a) (ii)*তে গভর্ণমেণ্ট বলিয়াছেন যে আমার অনুরোধে চাকারিয়া সাব-রেজিষ্টার আফিস কক্সবাজারের সঙ্গে joint করা হইয়াছিল; আমি এখন গভর্ণমেণ্টকে বলিতে চাই—আমার ব্যক্তিগত অনুরোধ বাদ দিয়ে, দেশবাসী সকলের পক্ষে আমি পুনরায় অনুরোধ করিতেছি—এই দুর্দ্দিনে লোকের যাতায়াতের অসুবিধার বিষয় বিবেচনা করিয়া পুনরায় ঐগুলিকে joint office করিবেন কি? বিশেষত: ঐ স্থানটা এয়ার রেইডের ক্ষেত্র জন্য লোকের যাতায়াতের আরো অসুবিধা হইয়া থাকে।

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: মাননীয় মেম্বর সাহেব যে বলেছেন যে, office গুলি independent করিবার দরুণ "এয়ার রেইডের" সময় লোকের যাতায়াতের অসুবিধা হচ্চে, এই প্রশ্নটা যদি কখনো আমাদের সাম্নে তোলা হয়, তাহলে পরে বিবেচনা করা হবে।

Khan Bahadur Haji BADI AHMED CHOUDHURY: *(a) (iii)* উত্তরে বলা হইয়াছে চাকারিয়া কক্সবাজারের সঙ্গে joint আফিস করার দরুণ জনসাধারণ কক্সবাজার ও কুতুবদিয়ায় যাওয়া সুবিধা হওয়ায় তথায় অনেক কাগজ রেজেষ্টারী করিয়াছে, এ অবস্থায় publicএর সুবিধা বন্ধ করিয়া গভর্ণমেণ্ট তাহাদের বাধ্য করিয়া তাহাদের ঐ স্থানে নিতেছেন কেন?

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: আমি উত্তরে বলেছি পাব্লিকের অসুবিধা না হয়ে সুবিধাই হয়েছে। (KHAN BAHADUR HAJI BADI AHMED CHOUDHURY: একটু আস্তে আস্তে জোরে ভাল করিয়া বলুন।) আমি *(a) (iii)*তে যে উত্তর দিয়েছি—সেটা মেম্বর সাহেব খুব ভাল কোরে পোড়ে দেখবেন তাতে এই কথা বলা হয়েছে —ঐ রকম বন্দোবস্ত করাতে লোকের অসুবিধা হয়েছিল, তারা সেখানে না গিয়ে কুতুবদিয়া ও কক্সবাজারে যাওয়াই সুবিধা বোধ করতো।

Khan Bahadur Haji BADI AHMED CHOUDHURY: মাননীয় মন্ত্রী সাহেব অনুগ্রহ করিয়া বলিবেন কি লোকে সুবিধাঅসুবিধা দেশের—লোকের যে সমস্ত য়ুনিয়ন বোর্ড আছে, (The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: আবার তো আপনার কথা বুঝতে পারছিনে।) আমি বলিতেছি এই যে আপনারা এখানে বসিয়া বলিতেছেন যে লোকের অসুবিধা হইয়াছিল, আপনারা স্থানীয় য়ুনিয়ন বোর্ডের মতামত এ বিষয়ে সংগ্রহ করিয়া তদনুসারে কার্য্য করিবেন কি? য়ুনিয়ন বোর্ডের মতে লোকের অসুবিধাই হইয়াছে।

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: সামান্য কিছু সংখ্যক লোকের অসুবিধা হতে পারে। কিন্তু নূতন যে বন্দোবস্ত করা হয়েছিল তাতে দেখা গেছে গভর্ণমেণ্টের খুব ক্ষতি

হয়েছে। কাজেই সামান্য কিছু লোকের সুবিধা হলেও গভর্ণমেণ্ট এত ক্ষতি স্বীকার কোরে সামান্য কয়েকটী লোকের সুবিধা করতে রাজী নন।

Khan Bahadur Haji BADI AHMED CHOUDHURY: মাননীয় মন্ত্রী মহাশয় যা বলিলেন তাহাতে ১৯৩৯ সন পর্য্যন্ত যতগুলি কাগজ রেজেষ্টারী হইয়াছে তার আগেকার চেয়ে এই সময় অনেক বেশী কাগজ কলকাতায় রেজেষ্টারী হইয়াছে। ওদিকে গভর্ণমেণ্ট বলিতেছেন যে ব্যাপারটা ক্ষতিকর হইয়াছে। আমি বলিতেছি এ সমস্ত মিথ্যা কথা।

Mr. SPEAKER: আপনি যে বলেছেন মিথ্যা কথা—এরূপ এখানে বলা সঙ্গত নয়।

Mr. ABDUL LATIF BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government will consider the desirability of accepting the view expressed by Khan Bahadur Haji Badi Ahmed Choudhury as to the advantages and disadvantages?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Disposal of machine parts, furniture, etc., in the Bengal Government Press.

62. **Mr. A. M. A. ZAMAN:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Finance Department be pleased to state whether—

(*i*) it is the practice with the Government to sell away unserviceable and surplus articles to the highest bidder in auction sale after due publicity; and

(*ii*) it is a fact that in the Bengal Government Press machineries, machine parts, furniture and other articles were sold away in good condition only at a nominal price during the last 3 years without due publicity?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps the Government intend to take against the officers responsible for the loss done to the Government?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) the particulars of machineries, machine parts, furniture and other articles sold away each year during the last 3 years;

(*ii*) the date of purchase and date of sale of such articles in each case; and

(*iii*) the original price and the sale price of each of such articles?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: (*a*) (*i*) Yes.

(*ii*) No.

(*b*) Does not arise.

(*c*) The preparation of a statement giving the data necessary to furnish a complete reply to this part of the honourable member's questions would involve an amount of time and labour that would not be justifiable at the present time.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: With reference to answer (*a*)(*ii*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Government has enquired whether or not Government has suffered any loss by the sale of machineries, machine parts, furniture and other articles?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: I do not think there has been any loss.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Government consider the desirability of enquiring into the allegations that will appear from the question?

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no allegation in the question.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Sir, my question is whether Government will consider the desirability of making an enquiry into the allegations as appear in question (*a*)(*ii*)?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: I did not discover any allegation in the question, but I can say this that, before framing my reply, I had an enquiry made.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: With reference to answer (*a*)(*i*), that it is the practice with the Government to sell away unserviceable and surplus articles to the highest bidder in auction sale, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state when the last auction sale took place and who were the participants in the sale?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: I want notice.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is aware that there is a regular scandal going on by some of the officers surreptitiously selling away things to their own proteges?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: I am not aware of that. When I had a general enquiry made, as I have said, I did not come to know of any scandal.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the articles or the parts of machinery mentioned in the question are advertised for sale in the newspapers?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: I cannot specifically answer that question, but if notice is given I may look into it.

Mr. ABDUL LATIF BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he will consider the desirability of ascertaining if these things are sold by public auction?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: I shall enquire into the matter.

Mr. ABDUL LATIF BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he is prepared to inform the House the result of his enquiry?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: If the House so desire, I will do it.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what machine parts and furniture were sold during the last three yeas?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: I would ask for notice.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: With reference to answer (*c*) will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the amount that would be necessary in preparing a statement as asked for?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Time and labour that would be required in preparing the statement would be enormous, and it would not be justifiable to undertake such a work.

Mr. JOGESH CHANDRA GUPTA: Is not a stock book of machine parts maintained in the Government Press?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: I want notice of that question.

Mr. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to look into the matter as to whether such practice was adopted beforehand or not?

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: I have already said I will make a general enquiry into its working.

Adjournment motion.

Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: Mr. Speaker, I have already given notice that I shall move an adjournment motion to discuss the banning by the Government of Bengal of the publication in the press of the joint statement issued by the leaders of the parties in the Opposition in the Bengal Legislative Assembly criticizing the observations of the Food Secretary, Government of India, on the food situation in Bengal as published recently in the local newspapers.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Roy, you move your motion.

Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: I move that this Assembly do now adjourn to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance and of recent occurrence, namely, the banning by the Government of Bengal of the publication in the press of the joint statement issued by the leaders of the parties in the Opposition in the Bengal Legislative Assembly criticizing the observations of the Food Secretary, Government of India, on the food situation in Bengal as published recently in the local newspapers.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: On a point of order. I want to point out that Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee speaking on the general discussion of the Budget said that "There is a complete black-out today, I say, of the publication of news and views so far as food policies are concerned. Orders have been issued by the Government of Bengal that nothing will be allowed to be published and this goes to suggest that there is inefficiency and muddle on the part of Government. There is no guarantee that Government will not be guilty of muddle," and so on. And Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy's comments further on while Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee was speaking show that he was also present, and as far as my information goes, Sir, this statement was given to the press on Sunday and it was not published on Monday and the honourable members knew that Government had banned the thing. (Cries of "no, no" from the Opposition.) So the first opportunity of bringing this question was on Monday. I submit that in view of the clear statement made by Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee that there was a black-out——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: There was no reference to this statement at all.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please. He is raising a point of order.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: No, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: He is making a statement on which he would like to base his point of order.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Let him stand on facts.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us hear him.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Therefore, I submit that as far as the black-out of the press is concerned with regard to the statement about food which is likely to undermine confidence it was known to the members of the Opposition, and therefore, Sir, this banning is only a corollary to what was already known. It is quite possible that the honourable members may have got the information, but the general advice to the press—actually there was no order—being not to publish any statement which is likely to undermine confidence at the present time, and as this statement must have come under that category, they were advised not to publish it. There is no definite order of Government—I am not taking shelter behind it—but the press were advised, and I do say that this policy of the Government was known to the members of the Opposition on Monday and that was the time when they could have raised it if they liked and not afterwards at a later date. My objection is on the ground that they did not avail of the first opportunity.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Sir, the adjournment motion here is against the policy of the Government. The banning of a particular statement was only an instance. They have brought out an instance against the policy, and that policy they want here today to condemn by an adjournment motion. Therefore, Sir, if that policy was known to them on Monday they had ample opportunity of agitating that matter before this House. It is immaterial whether the statement in question was banned later on—three months hence or two months hence. The real thing which matters is the policy underlying the general advice given to the press that nothing should be published which is likely to deteriorate public confidence. Therefore, Sir, I say that this policy of banning was known to them and they ought to have come earlier before this House.

Then they will have an opportunity during cut motions. They had an opportunity during the budget discussions. They did have an opportunity even yesterday when financial matters were being agitated here. Here in this House a ruling was given by the ex-Speaker that when a financial matter is brought before the House the House can ventilate its grievances. You, Sir, waived the urgency of the adjournment motion but that did not remove the necessity of agitating the matter in connection with financial matters which were brought by the Government. Therefore, they had an opportunity of agitating that matter yesterday also. They did not avail of that opportunity during the discussion on financial matters. They will have an opportunity of discussing this matter during the budget discussions and cut motions. Therefore, Sir, on several grounds I would suggest that this adjournment motion is not in order. If this is allowed it will be a sheer waste of time of the House.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I want to submit only a few words in reply to the points raised by Sir Nazimuddin and by the Chief Whip of the Government. Evidently Sir Nazimuddin is taking his stand on rule 98, sub-rule (*3*) of the Assembly Procedure Rules which provides that one of the restrictions on a motion of this character would be that the motion must not revive discussion on a matter which has been discussed in the same session. This, Sir, relates to motions and motions are only those which are defined under rule 36, that is, a matter requiring the decision of the Assembly is brought forward by means of a question put by the Speaker on a motion proposed by the Speaker himself or by any other member.

My first objection to the point of order is this, that during the general discussion of the budget there has been no opportunity of any motion as such being discussed or formally placed before the House for its votes. So the question of a decision of the House or discussion on a motion does not arise, and therefore any observation generally made during the general discussions of the budget cannot be covered and cannot be intended to rule out an adjournment motion even if it has been once discussed. That is my first point.

Sir, my second point is even assuming that it does, the subject-matter that is proposed to be discussed now was never and could not have been brought to the notice of the House earlier because the event actually occurred after the debate on Monday took place. So far as our information goes, the subject proposed to be discussed is the banning of a particular statement—not the policy behind that banning or the general outlook of Government on these matters. It is not our case, and I believe my Leader will make it clear, that Government have no authority or should never exercise any power of restricting certain publications if they go so far wrong as to affect the lives and privileges of the community at large. It is a particular statement issued by responsible leaders of the Opposition in reply to certain observations made by the Government of India Food Secretary, who again allowed that statement to be published in the local papers, that is the subject-matter which is proposed to be discussed. And with all due respect to the Leader of the House I submit, Sir, that Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee never brought in this subject and from excerpts read out one could never imagine that he had that particular intention in view.

My third objection is this that cut motions during the budget debate have to be disposed of in a manner which leaves little room for proper discussion of a subject-matter which arises out of an emergency. Budget cut motions have been and have to be given notice of 10 days before and here, Sir, we are in the midst of a session which is a long session and the plea that there is a possibility of cut motions during the budget debate cannot be raised to shut out important privileges of this House to discuss an emergent matter of public importance of this character.

With these observations, Sir, I submit that you may not be pleased to accept the objection of Sir Nazimuddin.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Sir, in connection with this matter referred to by Dr. Mookerjee, I do not like to add to what has been said by Dr. Sanyal. But there is one point, Sir, about which I would like to say something. An adjournment motion is intended either to censure or

at least to condemn the Government. Censuring or condemnation is a question of vote and during general discussion no matter can be put to vote. Therefore, Sir, our right to have this matter put to the test by vote is a matter which could not be concluded by what took place during the general discussion.

Then, Sir, with regard to the other question as to our getting an opportunity during cut motions, I submit, Sir, that you as Speaker who at one time was an ordinary member—you know very well that during the cut motions you have got to pack through limited time the crowded grievances of one year if not more. We do not know whether we shall get one or two days but to raise the contention that this will be available during the cut motions is to say that one day will be applied to this particular matter. That is to say, the numerous grievances of the province will be practically guillotined, and that is certainly not a desirable state of things. And, Sir, the nature of the matter proposed to be raised during this discussion is of such importance that it ought not to be allowed to wait even for a day. After all, food is the primary concern of the province and in comparison with the importance of this topic every other topic is of secondary importance. And, Sir, the statement which has been banned is a statement not of X Y Z but a statement which is even more important than the statement of a Minister of State. The banning of such a statement is a matter which should be discussed at the earliest possible opportunity. In any view, Sir, it is only right and proper that we should discuss the matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: Does any other member want to speak?

Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: Sir, may I make an observation on a question of fact only? Sir, I want to point out with due respect to the Leader of the House that really he is confusing the policy with an incident. That is the point which I want you to remember, Sir, when you give your ruling.

The next thing is also on a question of fact. I came to know that this statement was banned by Government on Tuesday. Therefore, Sir, I took the first opportunity of bringing it up before this House.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Sir, a ruling by the previous Speaker in the matter of the admission of the motion under discussion should have been our guide in this matter. It is not a question of banning a statement. The facts mentioned by the gentlemen opposite are incorrect. Speaking as one who is connected with the Press, I submit, Sir, that they have been caught napping. A misleading statement has been made as to when information about the "advice" was sent to the Press. The advice was given on Sunday and, therefore, the honourable mover was in possession of the information on that day. Today, it is Thursday. Three valuable days have been lost. That is a fact, and on the text of the section governing adjournment motions I think this motion should have been declared as not in order.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Sir, I draw your attention to rule 98(*v*) which says: "the motion must not deal with a matter on which a resolution could not be moved". Here, Sir, the general policy of Government is that such matters should not be allowed to be published which will undermine public morale, so that the confidence of the public

may not be shaken. Here probably the Leader of the Congress party has tabled a motion because he thinks that since a statement issued by certain parties of the Opposition was not allowed to be published therefore it was an encroachment on the privilege of a member. But, Sir, there was no instance of banning any particular statement; the statement was automatically banned because of a policy which had been previously adopted by Government. Therefore, Sir, when it affected a question of principle, this adjournment motion should be held to be out of order.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Sir, may I just point out one thing with reference to the observation of my honourable friend Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi? I understood him to say that a statement which is misleading and which does not contain facts has been made by some of the speakers on this side inasmuch as it has been stated that the mover of this motion did not know on Monday evening or even on Tuesday that Government had banned the publication of the statement in question. Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi said that as a newspaper editor he came to know on Sunday that such a ban had been imposed. Did I understand him to say that as soon as he obtained that information from the Government on Sunday he forthwith transmitted it to the members of the Opposition and therefore the members were in a position to know even on Sunday or on Monday that such a ban had been imposed? In the absence of any such statement by him I do not see the substance or the meaning of his complaint.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think I have heard every body who wanted to say anything on this point. In my opinion, there is nothing in the rules or in any convention of which I am aware which makes the present motion out of order. I hold this to be in order, and I will now read out to the House the short statement and then ask whether the member has got the leave of the House. The short statement runs thus:

"It was reported in the newspapers in Calcutta on the 25th February, 1944, that the Food Secretary to the Government of India, Mr. R. H. Hutchings, made certain observations on the 22nd February, at New Delhi on the food situation in Bengal in which among other things he deprecated all attempts at 'taking Bengal into a second famine' and condemned defeatism. The leaders of different parties in the Opposition in the Bengal Legislative Assembly thereafter issued a joint statement to the Press in Calcutta criticising the approach made by Mr. Hutchings in dealing with the present food situation and warning the Government against complacency in high quarters and the expression of pious wishes which have been at the root of the deterioration in the food situation in this province last year.

On Friday the 25th February, Mr. J. H. Burder, President, Bengal Chamber of Commerce, made a significant observation in course of his presidential address at the annual meeting of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce that among other things 'injudicious articles in the Press' on the present food situation amounted to '5th column activity'. Shortly after this it was learnt yesterday that the Government of Bengal had banned the publication of the joint statement issued by the Party leaders. Hence this motion."

Is there any objection?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Yes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Those who are in favour of the motion will please rise in their seats.

(Requisite number of members rose in their seats.)

As the requisite number of members have risen the member has got the leave of the House.

Clearing of Press and visitors' galleries.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I want to make a suggestion, Sir. When the discussion takes place I submit that the Press and the galleries be cleared.

Mr. J. C. GUPTA: We are discussing that very matter.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: This is a very important matter, Sir.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Let us understand his justification for the Nazi method he is proposing.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, I would seriously request you——

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Sir——

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Sanyal, please resume your seat.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: I know what he is going to say.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Sanyal, will you please resume your seat? Before that is done it is going to be 5 p.m. I want to know whether you have got any suggestions to make with regard to time. Let us have that first decided.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: As far as the question of time is concerned the discussion may begin from 5 to 7 and that will be before *Magreb* prayer.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think it will be convenient if we begin after *Asar* prayer. That means 5-15 and I fix that time.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I would like to know why the honourable members are objecting to a secret session.

Mr. J. C. GUPTA: A secret session can only be held by the consent of the House and a secret session to discuss the banning of the news will defeat its own purpose. We are complaining against the banning of the news and the Hon'ble the Leader of the House is trying to get you to agree to ban the news in advance and, I may say, give the judgment in advance. I submit, under the circumstances, this prayer ought not to be allowed.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: The Government are at liberty to carry on all ruthless activities according to their pleasure, but so far as you are concerned, Sir, you are not only the chosen custodian of this House but also of the whole province: that is to say, the interests of the entire province are in your hands and I do not think you will agree to stultify the debate by acceding to the unreasonable demand of Government.

Mr. A. F. STARK: At this point, Sir, I submit that the Press should be ordered to withdraw when we are about to discuss a statement which has been banned from the Press by Government on the ground that it is harmful to the food situation. If we discuss the statement in the presence of the Press I submit that that would be putting the Press in an impossible situation because even if they do not publish the statement they will be obliged to publish a substance when publishing the proceedings of this House. I submit that we should take no risk of publishing facts which may be damaging to the food situation.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: A Daniel has come to judgment!

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: I submit, Sir, that if you order the Press to go out you will be simply justifying the action taken by Government. I think that sort of an order cannot be passed without first hearing the leaders of the different groups because it would be prejudging the issue.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: (As soon as Mr. Siddiqi rose to speak there was a loud noise from the Opposition). Sir, I seek protection of the Chair from this sort of disturbance.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. I hope the member should be allowed to speak undisturbed.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Sir, it will not only place the Press into difficulty but it might also place the Chair in a rather awkward position for this reason that in a discussion of this nature arguments are not likely to be restricted to the action taken on which we are trying to labour but they are likely to run into the actual policy and therefore, Sir,——(Interruption from Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal and noise from the Opposition benches)——Sir, will you stop him, when I rise on my right to speak?

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Sanyal, will you kindly not interrupt?

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir,——(Loud noise from the Coalition benches).

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. Please do not shout.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Sir, I am referring to rule 125 of the Assembly Procedure Rules, and I am raising a point of order in that connection. Rule 125 runs thus: "The Speaker, whenever he thinks fit, may order the galleries to be cleared". You will notice, Sir, that the matter is entirely left to your discretion and you have got to act here on your own motion, not at the suggestion of any person however high his position may be or even at the suggestion of the Leader of the House. It rests entirely in your discretion and it is on your own motion and not at the suggestion of anybody that the galleries can be cleared.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: But anybody can make some suggestion to you, Sir.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: That would be compromising the position of the Speaker. Sir, no harm will ensue if the proceedings be published in the Press for, after all, we are not discussing the food situation or the food position in the country. What we are discussing is the banning of a particular statement issued by the leaders and that will bring under discussion the policy behind the banning order and not

the food policy of the Government. Therefore, no such harm can ensue as the Government consider it necessary to prevent by the banning of the publication of anything regarding the food position in the province. That order stands and the Press will abide by that order but so far as the motion before the House is concerned it does not at all bring under discussion the food position in the country. It only proposes to discuss the policy of banning the publication of all discussion regarding the food position in the country and we intend to discuss only the policy behind the banning order. Therefore, I submit, no harm can ensue.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri has quoted rule 125 and has said that it is the Speaker's option to clear the galleries and that no member can make a request to that effect to the Speaker. Sir, I beg to differ from that view and I am of opinion that everybody in the House has got the right to suggest to you on any particular occasion that the galleries should be cleared.

Mr. SPEAKER: You need not reply to that, Khan Bahadur; that is common sense.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Sir, it is a parliamentary convention that any member can suggest that the galleries be cleared only for the purpose of drawing Mr. Speaker's attention to it but it lies entirely in his discretion whether he should do so or not. I hope you will follow that convention and if you think fit you will clear the galleries on this occasion.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: I do submit, Sir, that you will not exercise your prerogative under rule 125 and do something for which there is really no precedent. There is gagging of the Press and there should not be a gagging of the Legislature. On the other hand you have a precedent so far as the Central Legislature is concerned. During the last few months there have been cases where adjournment motions similar to the one about to be moved by Mr Kiran Sankar Roy were moved in New Delhi and there was no order given by the President nor was a request made by Sir Reginald Maxwell. But Sir Nazimuddin wants to out-Maxwell Maxwell himself for the purpose of clearing the Press galleries. My second point is that if anything is discussed on the floor of the House which should not in the interest of the food situation be allowed to be published, that is a matter which may separately be considered by the Home Minister as such matters had been considered in the past. You know that certain matters discussed on the floor of the Legislature were not published in the Press and when we came and complained before you and the Deputy Speaker both of you said that you were helpless. So there should be no attempt on the part of the Government to gag the legitimate publication of discussions on a vital question like this.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: I was not surprised to hear the Chief Minister putting forward the plea that the Press and the galleries ought to be cleared, otherwise the object of the Government in banning the statement would be defeated. But I was certainly surprised to hear my friend Mr. Stark, a Britisher, born and bred, rising up from his seat and supporting a policy which is worse than the most barbarous system of suppression of the Press. Now, Sir, I would like to remind my friends of the European Group

(Interruptions from the Coalition Benches), I am only reminding them of what they themselves did in this House——

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: On a point of order, Sir. On what is he speaking? He must be relevant.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: I am only asking my friends of the European Group through you——

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: How can he ask the European Group?

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: I am only reminding my friends of the European Group through you because——

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Fazlul Huq, will you please resume your seat?

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: If you do not want me to speak, I won't.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is far from me to interrupt you in the least. That is not my desire specially in view of the fact that you are not very well. What I mean is this that while speaking on a subject like this, it is desirable to confine strictly to the point and not to pass remarks

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Even to meet a point raised by another member?

Mr. SPEAKER: I must frankly confess that I have not been able to follow him all along.

Mr. SYED BADRUDDOJA: Sir, there was nothing irrelevant in his speech

Mr. SPEAKER: I have never said that there was anything irrelevant.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: Sir, if you are here going to show me any concession because of my ill health, I would rather die than take such a favour in your hands. Sir, you talk of relevancy——

Mr. SPEAKER: No, no, I am not talking of relevancy I have never said about relevancy.

Mr. A. K. FAZLUL HUQ: I have been at the bar for the last 44 years and I know what are the rules of relevancy. I do not want to be taught about relevancy by anybody including Mr Speaker himself. I was only going to remind my friends of the European Group of their attitude towards the food question this time last year in supporting a motion——(Cries of "Shame" "Shame" from the Opposition and interruptions from the Coalition benches).

(The House was at this stage adjourned for 15 minutes.)

(After adjournment.)

Mr. SPEAKER: I know I have got power to order clearing of the galleries. I also know that there may be secret sessions of this House and,

in fact, I remember there have been occasions in this very House when the galleries have been cleared by order of the Speaker. But the procedure prescribed is an extraordinary one and is intended to apply to extraordinary situations. I do not think the present is an extraordinary situation that requires such a procedure to be adopted. The Government's standing order is there. There have been occasions in the past when the publication of the proceedings of this House has been banned. If after the discussion is over, Government think that additional steps are necessary, it will be quite open to them to take additional steps. So, I cannot accept the suggestion of the Leader of the House.

Adjournment motion.

Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance and of recent occurrence, namely, the banning by the Government of Bengal of the publication in the press of the joint statement issued by the Leaders of the parties in the Opposition in the Bengal Legislative Assembly criticising the observations of the Food Secretary, Government of India, on the food situation in Bengal, as published recently in the local newspapers.

Mr. Speaker, the facts on which I rely for my adjournment motion are crystal clear and the totalitarian mentality which I seek to condemn is also very obvious, but the time allotted for a motion of this nature is so short that I am afraid it will not be possible for me to express completely the views we hold on this policy of shutting out of views.

Let me, Sir, briefly put the facts before the House. Mr. R. H. Hutchings, Food Secretary to the Government of India, made certain observations on the food situation in Bengal on the 22nd of February. On the 25th, this was reported in the local newspapers. Sir, I do not wish to quarrel very much with that statement. It is the usual sort of statement to which we are used. There is an air of superior wisdom, there is a good deal of patronising and there is also a great deal of callousness to human suffering. I do not propose to read that statement of Mr. Hutchings though I have it here. Mr. Hutchings patronizingly pats the back of the Bengal Government and I have no doubt that the Bengal Government, so imperious to us, the poor members of the Opposition, will sit upon its hind legs in ecstacy. He is also patronizing to us. He admits that some of the criticisms which we had made are fair and he assures us that all those criticisms, all the problems and all the points that we have raised on the floor of the House and outside are engaging his attention. The sum total of Mr. Hutchings' speech is this: that Mr. Hutchings is in the Delhi Secretariat, the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy is in the Bengal Secretariat, there is a very generous Viceroy ruling over us, the British Army is in India, and we, the poor Indians, need not worry. This, Sir, is the statement of Mr. Hutchings.

Sir, I am not very sure of the antecedents of Mr. R. H. Hutchings, C.I.E., but I have a faint recollection that in 1932 Mr. Hutchings then an Additional Political Secretary or Deputy Secretary honoured us with a visit when we were prisoners in the Dum Dum Central Jail. Two hundred to 300 political prisoners including some of the most brilliant sons of Bengal were in the

Dum Dum Jail packed like sardines in one room with corrugated iron roof, with solid walls on all sides, but without a single window to let in fresh air, to let in any light. That, Sir, was the condition in the month of June. On our representation Mr. Hutchings was kind enough to visit us and when we told him the inconvenience, the insanitary condition in which we were living at the time, Mr. Hutchings smiled pleasantly being a nice person and pointed to the sky-light 23 feet high over our head and thought that that was sufficient for the purpose (laughter). It is evident, Sir, that Mr. Hutchings with growing age and increasing responsibility has not become more responsive to human sufferings, and if I am not mistaken, it is this Mr. Hutchings who was lent by the Government of India to the Government of Burma, and if I remember aright, he was in charge of evacuation. We have heard ugly stories about racial discrimination during that evacuation. Well, what more could we expect from Mr. Hutchings. Sir, on Mr. Hutchings' statement the leaders of the Opposition thought it necessary to issue a statement warning the Government that the condition prevailing in Bengal is such that there should be no self-complacency on the part of Government. They also cautioned the people to be careful, and, Sir, I propose to read that statement. The statement runs thus:—"Our attention has been drawn to a statement recently issued by Mr. Hutchings, the India Government Food Secretary, from Delhi regarding the food situation in Bengal." Sir, I shall read it very slowly, so that everyone may understand what a dangerous document it is. "It appears that Mr. Hutchings was in Bengal a few days ago but we were not even aware of any attempt made by him to contact public opinion in the province. We were not even aware that he was in our midst. It is, therefore, reasonable to presume that he looked into the food problem in Bengal through the eyes of the Ministry and the officials, and the over-optimism which he has shown is, therefore, easily explained. It is not our intention to raise any scare nor, so far as we are aware, any attempts are being made by the public for 'taking Bengal into a second famine,' as has been insinuated by the Food Secretary, but we feel that we shall be failing in our duty to the public if we do not point out that the complacency in official circles is fraught with great danger. Mr. Hutchings has deprecated all attempts at 'taking Bengal into a second famine'. We wonder whether he realises that a similar complacency on the part of the Government, last year since the advent of the Ministry was to a great extent responsible for what he evidently calls the 'First Famine' towards the end of last year. Let not that tragic blunder be repeated in 1944." We are told that there has been a bumper crop in Bengal this year but a mere bumper crop without a sound scheme of procurement and distribution cannot save Bengal from another famine. Already reports of rising prices and scarcity of rice and paddy are daily pouring in from different parts of Bengal especially from Comilla, Chittagong and Dacca. Whether it is due to Government purchase of *aman* crop, size of which has been admitted to be considerable is for the Government to say. Government have also so far done little to make a visible demonstration of success by moving food-grains to deficit areas. Symptoms are, therefore, disquieting. What people suffer from is not "defeatism" but want of confidence in the present Ministry's capacity and integrity to tackle the situation in a manner

consistent with the welfare of all classes of people. Complacency in high quarters and pious wishes would not achieve anything; nor will confidence be restored by prevention of legitimate criticism of official policy and action relating to food."

This, Sir, is the dangerous document which disturbed the mind of Sir Nazimuddin, the leader of the Trojan heroes, and Trojan heroes became nervous. Now, Sir, this document was signed by six persons, one of whom had been the Chief Minister of this province, three of whom were recently Ministers of the Crown, Mr. Hem Chandra Nasker, the distinguished Scheduled Caste leader and an ex-Mayor (Mr. A. M. ABDUL HAMID: Question). Do you question that he was an ex-Mayor? Then you question your own sanity. (Uproar.) I say, these gentlemen by their long service can claim to be heard by the people and also claim to be heard by a Government which calls itself a popular Government. But, this statement was not allowed to be published. Orders were given that this must be stopped and of course it was stopped. Sir, I do not want to take too much time of the House.

The issue before the House raised by this motion is simple, straight and clear. Have we the right to differ from the present Ministry? That, Sir, is the issue. You may like that statement or you may not like that statement. That is not the point. The point is whether one has a right to differ from this Ministry, and in differing whether one has a right to give expression to that difference. Or are we living, as my friend Dr. Sanyal said under Nazism which means one leader, one party, one programme and one voice and the negation of all opposition. That, Sir, is the issue before the House and I hope the issue is so clear that there could not be any difference of opinion on this matter.

Mr. Speaker, I have finished, but before I sit down, I would like to ask every Indian in this House, as I ask myself, why do we keep on this sham show? If we cannot save our people from dying, if we cannot save our mothers and sisters from going about naked or in rags and from dying, if we cannot prevent our children from eating garbage from the dustbins, what is the use of our being here, making speeches and prerorating in Latin. Sir, I too would also like to conclude with a quotation, I am ashamed to say, from a Bengali poet in this Assembly of learned men. Not knowing Latin or Greek, hardly English well enough to express my feelings, I have to fall back on Bengali (Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri: With apology). I have already apologised. I shall quote from a humble poet from my own district. This is what he says reminding us of the realities of the situation:—

স্বদেশ স্বদেশ করিস কারে
এ দেশ তোদের নয়
এই যমুনা গঙ্গা নদী
তোমার ইহা হতো যদি
পরের পণ্যে গোরা সৈন্যে
জাহাজ কেন বয়?

* * * *

কার স্বদেশে কাদের মেয়ে
এমনতর পথে পেয়ে
জোর জবরে গাড়ীর ভিতর
সাড়ী কেড়ে লয়?
চাবুক খাবার বাবু তোরা
পিলে ফাটার ভয়
* * * *

এই যে ক্ষেতে শস্য ভরা
তোমার তো নয় একটি ছড়া
তোমার হলে তাদের দেশে
চালান কেন হয়?
তোমরা কেবল চাষের মালিক
গ্রাসের মালিক নয়।
স্বদেশ স্বদেশ করিস কারে
স্বদেশ তোদের নয়॥

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Sir, I rise to accord my wholehearted support to the motion which has been placed before this House with such ability, eloquence and depth of feeling by my esteemed and honourable friend, Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy

Sir, the issue that has been raised by this motion and has been clinched by Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy is whether on a vital matter of this kind, namely, the food situation in the province and the food policy of the Government of Bengal, it is open to those who represent vast sections of the people of this province to utter a word of caution to the Government with regard to the policy that they have been following. Remember, Sir, in their individual capacities these leaders of parties in Opposition may not count for anything but according to the constitutional practice, for good or for evil, they have been called upon to represent vast constituencies in this province, probably more than 90 per cent. of the Hindus of this province and about half of its Muslim population. In these circumstances, is it not their bounden duty to voice the opinion of their constituencies when a charge has been levelled by the Food Secretary to the Government of India that there is an attempt to bring about a second famine in Bengal by a criticism of the food policy of the Government. That is the issue before us. When the Legislature is not meeting it is necessary that a mischievous statement made by the Food Secretary is nailed to the counter immediately it sees the light of day. That is the position which the leaders of the Opposition in this House have taken in this matter. Now if the Government desire that they will carry on their food policy in this province through the gagged silence of the people let them take that responsibility. You remember Sir, that during the last famine which devastated this province when statements were made from the Opposition calling attention to the most serious situation towards which the province was heading, one of the Secretaries to the Government of India stood up in his place in the Central Assembly and said that there had been overdramatisation of the famine situation in Bengal.

It was a most shameless statement which a responsible officer could make on the floor of the House in the Central Assembly, you will find, Sir, that the mischief that was done by such a statement had to be undone by protests from myriad throats in Bengal and the rest of India. It was impossible for people to give even the faintest idea of the actualities of the situation in this unhappy province. Even my esteemed friend, Mr. David Hendry, the Leader of the European Group, strongly condemned such an attitude on the part of the Home Secretary to the Government of India. Mr. Hendry said that it was a misstatement of facts to say that there was overdramatisation of the food situation in Bengal. That is exactly the position which the Government of Bengal is now taking and which the Food Secretary, taking the cue from the Government of Bengal, has also taken in making the statement which is the subject-matter of discussion today. Now, Sir, the whole world was shocked to find what had happened in Bengal. After the death roll had mounted to enormous figures, after the facts in their lurid light had been disclosed, the world was shocked to find that the very foundation of civilization had been shaken. Now, can we in these circumstances allow the Government to carry on in the midst of gagged silence as they propose to do? Can we, as responsible representatives of the people of the province, sit quietly and allow Government to carry on in their own way without even uttering a word of protest or caution which we might consider necessary? In the districts, prices are mounting up and rice is not available in various places. Are we to sit quiet with our eyes blind-folded, with our hands behind our back, simply holding our breath in patience waiting for something to turn up, because Government are hatching and executing their plan for procurement and distribution in the secrecy of Government departments? Now, Sir, ask the newspapers. Let the Home Minister whose portfolio includes the Press ask the newspapers, fully to disclose the tale which is pouring in upon them every day from every corner of the province. It will go to show that rice is disappearing, that prices are mounting, and that starvation and vagrancy are again appearing in different places. The newspapers are not in a position to mention one word out of these messages which are pouring in upon them day after day. They used to publish these messages drawing the attention of Government to the sufferings of the people in the mufassal districts. They have been gagged, they have been silenced, not an echo of these complaints, of these cries of distress, finds any place in the newspapers of today. That is the position. That is the way in which the present Government seeks to work. Let them take into their confidence the leaders and other members of the Opposition and frame or revise their plan so that any such complaints may no longer be possible.

It was a great decision that the Speaker had made this evening that the gallery should not be cleared and that the Press should not be asked to stop publication of today's proceedings. It was a landmark in the history of Parliamentary Government in this province. I hope and trust that the Home Minister will not issue his writ to stop publication of these proceedings. If he does that, his name will go down in history as the upholder of Nazi methods, an expression which my esteemed friend Dr. Sanyal has used this evening. I hope he will allow the report of the proceedings to be published in the papers tomorrow in order that people may know throughout this province that their cries and their woes do not go unheeded on the floor

of the Legislature, that there are people who are free to ventilate them and that these are people who are trying to bring them to the notice of the Government.

I do not think I need take up the time of the House any more. I desire to conclude by uttering a note of warning. If Government want to carry on this game of "hush, hush", this game of silence, in a matter of such supreme importance, theirs will be a tremendous responsibility for which they will be answerable to the people of this province.

Mr. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED: Sir, my esteemed friend Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy has already put before the House our view-point. The statement that was issued by the leaders of different parties was clear. I cannot understand why the present Government is so very nervous about any talk with regard to the food situation. Mr. Hutchings came from Delhi and went about the whole of Bengal, as he says, but whom he meant by Bengal we do not know. He came to Bengal but did not think it necessary that any one of the leaders in the Opposition of this House should be consulted or even talked to. He returned to Delhi and from that place, from that high pedestal, he issued a statement and that statement has been published in the Press. He has said that attempts are being made to taking Bengal to a second famine. We know what was done last year about this time. This very Government which was called to office by the late Sir John Herbert, told us, "Well, you don't worry, everything is all right". When Mr. Fazlul Huq's second Ministry was in office, Mr. Suhrawardy cried hoarse from the Opposition benches here, "Don't talk of shortage, there is plenty of food in the country"; and the very same statement was made by Mr. Suhrawardy when he assumed charge of the Civil Supplies Department. Well, if there was no shortage, if everything was all right, how will you account for the death of 40 lakhs of people in this hapless province? These Ministers who are adorning the Treasury Benches now were in office at that time. Why could not they check the deaths from starvation of so many persons? Why is this "hush, hush" policy today? We warn the Government—whether Mr. Hutchings issued the statement from Delhi or these Ministers took it into their heads to follow methods by which they want to stifle public discussion, by which they want to stifle even the publication of our statement in the press—that these methods will not stop the people from starving to death when they do not get food. Already we have received reports from different parts of the province that the moment the honourable agents of the Government went into different districts to purchase *aman* crop, from that moment the prices have risen. Let them declare what are the reasons for which prices have risen today in the mofussil areas. If everything goes all right why have prices risen? The other day my honourable friend Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee laid before the House the reports that came from different districts of this province. Sir, we have heard of war methods about which the British Government cry hoarse and about which this Government also cry hoarse: "Well, war purposes are there, war methods are there: war efforts are to be seen to success." May I ask, is this the way in which Bengal can be saved from being starved to death? I say that in order to save the people of Bengal from starvation not only the leaders of different parties but Bengal as a whole should be taken into confidence. If the people lose confidence in the Ministry, there is no escape. You cannot by stifling discussion save people from starvation.

Sir, I would not take much time of the House. I am warning this Government if they have allowed Mr. Hutchings' statement to be published in the Press, what was there for the Government to stop this innocent statement issued by different party leaders to be published in the Press? Then, Sir, Sir Nazimuddin went further as the chief, as the head of the administration. He wanted a secret session. If they so like, let them have a secret session of the Council of Ministers. That is all good. But don't talk of the fuss of a parliamentary method to be followed here by holding a secret session. There is no use for the Bengal Assembly to sit in secret. Let everybody go home and let Sir Nazimuddin retire from office and go home and hold secret meetings there: I can understand that position. But if the Ministry function and if they follow methods which are questionable, this House has every right to discuss that. I will condemn in strongest terms the method that has been followed to stifle the Press by not allowing the statement that was sent to the Press to be published. I hope sense will dawn on them but I doubt very much whether that will. Even now there is time because the crisis, the zero hour is approaching, and if the Ministry does not take the time by forelock, I do not know whether the catastrophe that was staged on the Bengal soil last year will not be staged again on the soil of Bengal this time also. We scent danger, and therefore, I warn this Government not to adopt methods which are questionable.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir——(Loud noise from the Opposition benches.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I hope there will be no interruption and no disturbance, and I also hope that you will kindly listen to him.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, we also hope there will be no provocation from the other side.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Sir, I have been taken a bit by surprise at being called upon to speak so early. I was waiting for the crescendo to go up. Speakers opposite have claimed the right to ventilate the grievances of the people: the leader of the Congress party has pithily put the whole of his case in a sentence. He asks: is the present Government of Bengal prepared to tolerate any difference of opinion? The very suggestion is preposterous for the very existence of the Opposition disproves it. The Government is anxious to receive advice and even criticism with a view to render every possible assistance to the people for their existence. I would like to submit the view that claims to speak in the name of the people of Bengal should be assessed arithmetically. This side of the House can speak for a larger majority of the people of Bengal than gentlemen opposite. Their argument and any statements they make either here or outside, are in proportion to their numbers in this House. Their decision today on whether to hold a secret session or to allow public discussion, is not based on any policy of protest against gagging. That as a general proposition, with regard to the position of the Indian Press, is known to all of us. Here the situation which has arisen is not gagging, not even advising, but it is crushing mischief before it is afoot. Why I hold this view is because, as the honourable member for the University of Calcutta will bear me out,

this problem of our famine, this problem of the misery of Bengal, has affected, as you will understand, Sir, the Muslims of the province more than the non-Muslim elements of the population. With folded hands I stood before the honourable member for the University and begged of him in the name of the Muslims of Bengal to stop making political advantage out of the misery of the people. I offered to act as his Secretary and jointly with him to do the best we could for them. I appealed to him to become a leader of the Muslims in these days of agony and earn their gratitude.

Sir, the Government of Bengal would not have done its duty if it had allowed repetition and reiteration of statements which could not be held as correct according to any standard of judgment for the reason that in relation to the famine they went about making wild statements. Instead of helping the people, instead of joining together and making common cause in a matter of mercy and charity, there was no argument in which and there was no place in the whole of the country where the famine of Bengal was not utilised to remove the Ministry which alone was trying to eliminate distress. It is surprising to me—and I have had some experience of politics in this country—to find people getting up in this House and condemning this Ministry. Before God and man, Sir, I honestly believe that the famine could have been averted if gentlemen opposite had done their duty during the 16 months when they were being led from union board to union board, district board to district board and municipality to municipality for additional chairmanships. The honourable and learned Leader of the Opposition had the hardihood to go and say in Delhi "Leave us alone. We are all right". What he did there and what did not make Bengal all right was what we have seen. After the cobra of famine had been crushed through the great and untiring efforts made by my friend the Hon'ble the Minister for Civil Supplies, these same gentlemen started their mischievous activities by dragging malaria, dysentery and cholera into their service. Now because this effort too has been baffled, these worthies are going about, claiming to talk in the name of service to the people, telling them that a second famine is before us and that they are going to die exactly as they did in 1943. This is to create false alarm and panic. If they did it honestly, if they did it truthfully and if they meant what they said, I would have no quarrel with them. But the whole thing turns on how to get this Ministry out of office. Had they been capable, had they done their duty by Bengal and had they established their *bona fides*, I would have been the last man to differ from them. It is astounding to suggest that this Ministry, which has rendered such valuable and meritorious service to the people of Bengal, should go out and the Government should, obviously, go into their hands, into the hands of people who, in more liberal and free countries, would have been impeached and penalized in a manner which they have not yet realised.

Sir, I do not in any way desire that Government should interfere with the freedom of the Press, but if the Press indulges in license, as was the case with a leading daily which, again in the garb of service of the people, was preaching revolution on the Russian basis, a Government could not be a Government if it did not take action. A Government would at the same time be unworthy of being called a Government if it did not stop people from getting their speeches full of poison and incorrect statements printed

in long columns to secure the applause of an intelligentsia which does not think for itself.

Sir, arguments have been used tonight which can be broken to pieces one after another but, even at this late stage, will they realise that the poor and the suffering people of Bengal have to be encouraged into a better psychology, into a better state of mind. We have got the full machinery to procure and remove food from surplus areas to deficit areas and there are thousands of officers in charge of that work. Food is being supplied, medicines are being supplied and clothing is being supplied. Having been left nothing, gentlemen opposite who must oppose for the mere pleasure of opposition, are trying to create issues which do not fit in with the situation as it exists today.

Sir, what I am trying to suggest to you is that upon the statement of a Secretary to the Government of India, they want to have one more mischievous statement published in the newspapers. They want to gad about saying "we are the advocates of the people of Bengal". I do not allow them that position. If there are any advocates who wish to serve Bengal and its majority population too, it is this side of the House and the rights of the majority have to be acknowledged by a minority howsoever vociferous it be. (Mr. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED: What is the total proportion of deaths, do you know?) I am being asked a funny question by a Muslim brother of mine. I would most humbly and respectfully request him to go with me and face a body of Muslim brothers of mine in any village, any city or any centre of this province——

Mr. SHAMSUDDIN AHMED: Come, I will go with you.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: People who have been declared by their brothers to be unworthy of their confidence, people who have in fact betrayed the confidence of the Muslims, the majority population of this province, people who are capitalists and bankers and yet claim to talk in the name of the peasants and workers of Bengal in the approved style of proletariat phraseology, are not the natural leaders of the people of Bengal. I ask them to go with me to my brothers in Bengal and then they will see where they stand.

So far as the remarks of my non-Muslim brothers are concerned, I have to bow down to them for the simple reason that I do not want them to feel that I am not looking after them. As a Muslim it is my duty to serve the cause of all. As a Muslim I have the duty to protect the interests of the Zimmies-non-Muslims. Their interests are safer in my hands——(Uproar.)

Mr. SYED BADRUDDUJA: Sir, as my revered leader is not in that condition of health to contribute to the discussion this afternoon I have been asked by him to discuss this question in my humble way. I am myself ailing since yesterday. So I am afraid I shall not be able to discuss the situation as I should.

Sir, Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi (Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Hailing from Sind.)—from whatever country he may be hailing—has discussed this question every time that this food debate has taken place in this House. He has tried to fasten the responsibility upon the Government of Mr. Fazlul Huq and has stressed that Mr. Fazlul Huq by his irresponsible statement

(according to him) in Delhi was responsible for the serious food situation in this province. Sir, that was contradicted several times and I need not refer to that again.

Sir, in this connection, I would refer to a portion of the speech that was delivered on 10th March, 1943, by Mr. Ispahani. He said: "If my words carry no fear to those Ministers" referring to the Ministers under Mr. Fazlul Huq's Government "of ours, do not the looting of *hats*, grain carts, shops and dacoities make them realise the chances of food riots on a wider scale? These may be suppressed by the force of the Government and bullets, but it will be admitted that a hungry man will do anything to feed himself and his family, and it will not be wrong when I say that in the forcible suppression of these riots the morals of the cause will be in favour of the rioter and not a Government which has neglected him criminally." Sir, I repeat what he said with reference to the present Government. The responsibility rests with this Government which has systematically pursued a policy which has resulted in the loss of so many millions of lives in Bengal. I fasten the responsibility on this Government. When well informed criticisms directed towards the well-being of the people are made from time to time by responsible leaders of public opinion, like Messrs. Fazlul Huq, Santosh Kumar Basu, Kiran Sankar Roy and Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee, who represent millions of people in this province, this Government comes forward to gag their statement, to gag the Press in order to create another terrible situation in the country. In a spirit of complacency, Mr. Hutchings might have uttered something just as his predecessor in office did earlier. His master, Mr. Amery also rose and made repeated statements in the House of Commons during the first half of 1943 that there was no scarcity in Bengal. He was not alive to the danger till October, 1943, when people were dying in millions, and when the situation actually headed towards a crash and desperate conditions created led to the unprecedented famine of 1943, with which the people were faced.

The statement of Mr. Hutchings has been contradicted by responsible leaders. That statement cannot but be objected to, in view of the fact that it has not had any criticism in the Press.

Whatever the political colour Mr. A. R. Siddiqi and his compeers might assume, whatever might be their slogans to hoodwink Muslim Bengal, the fact remains that not till Hindu and Marwari friends and other non-official organisations in the country came forward to help the people in their distress, the present Government's eyes were not opened to the realities of the situation and they were not even roused from their slumber. Government had not the goodness, the honesty, the candour, the sense of appreciation of the danger ahead, to provide medical help in time for the unfortunate victims of cholera, malaria and other preventible diseases. These diseases were raging in the countryside, exacting a heavy toll in hundreds and thousands.

Sir, I made a statement in the first week of November last wherein I stated that from my tours in the mufassal areas I came to the conclusion that unless not merely food supplies were rushed at once to the affected areas in the mufassal, but medical relief guaranteed through proper agencies there was no hope for the people including the Muslims of Bengal. You

will find that in Noakhali, in Chittagong, in Nilphamari, in Murshidabad, specially in Kandi subdivision, in Chandpur, in Dacca, specially in Munshiganj, in Madaripur and Rajbari, people have died in hundreds and thousands not merely for lack of sufficient supplies but even due to lack of medicines especially quinine. Till the military authorities came to the rescue of the people, this Government could not think of providing medical relief for these unfortunate people who were dying in hundreds and thousands.

Sir, my friend, Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi waxes eloquent as the leader of Muslims. It has always struck me most that this gentleman without any actual idea of the sufferings and miseries of the people in the countryside, without any contact with the difficulties and hardships of the masses, without knowing actually the economic condition that the people have been facing by reason of the most ill digested, ill conceived and mischievous policy of this Government, this gentleman comes forward to plead for Muslims of Bengal, who in the Muslim majority districts have been reduced to a position which has no parallel in any civilised country in the world. There is apprehension in the Muslim mind; there is apprehension in the Hindu mind; there is apprehension among people of all classes and conditions as regards the policy of the present Government which has hitherto been unsatisfactory, cruelly indifferent to the sufferings and miseries of the people. Sir, this Government by its unwise policy of distribution and procurement of foodgrains has brought about a situation which has been detrimental to the great majority of people including Muslims and Scheduled Castes. This Government cannot any longer be entrusted with the responsibility of administration of this province. The statement which has been issued by an irresponsible man in responsible position cannot therefore go unchallenged. As the statement of Mr. Amery could not be allowed to go unchallenged, as the statement of Sir John Herbert who was Governor of this province was not allowed to go unchallenged, similarly the statement, the irresponsible statement, of any person in authority could not be allowed to go unchallenged. Therefore, the leaders of parties voicing the feelings, sentiments and grievances of the people at large have naturally taken upon themselves the duty in the fitness of things to issue a statement contradicting that statement of Mr. Hutchings which is not merely misleading, not merely baseless, not merely incorrect, but actually mischievous and detrimental to the interests of the whole province. It has been said that there will be no famine. The very same thing was uttered on the last occasion. After the assumption of office by the Ministry, on the 7th, 13th, and 15th May, not only these Ministers themselves even the Food Member of the Viceroy's Council, Sir Muhammad Azizul Haque, uttered the same thing, viz., that there would be no famine, that there was no scarcity of foodstuffs or any deficit. The solution of the problem was there and yet there was the famine. There has been provision made on the assumption in the Budget for 1944-45, certainly not of sufficiency of foodstuffs under the head "Famine"—a provision that has jumped up to Rs. 1,10 lakhs for the maintenance of establishment and staff. If there is no necessity or apprehension of famine, why this unnecessary provision? If this Government had no reason to anticipate difficulties ahead, why should they come forward and add to the deficit in the province by this provision in the budget for meeting the food situation which might or might not arise?

Why should the Legislature be asked to vote for this huge provision? If leaders representing various groups and classes in the country meet and formulate a policy, it would have the co-operation and confidence of all sections of the people in the province. Simply by uttering a word here and there, issuing a mandate, a fiat or ukase this Government cannot improve the situation. It will go from bad to worse. I can assure you and through you all the members of this House that unless any wise policy is adopted by the Government, the whole country will again be faced with a difficult situation. I sound a note of warning. I assure you that we will be prepared to support and co-operate with the Government in any well conceived policy of procurement and distribution provided the transactions behind the scenes are not as dishonest, as shady, as corrupt, as abominable as have marked the administration of the province during recent months.

With these few words, I fully associate myself with the views that have been put forward by the mover of this adjournment motion.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Sir,——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr Mookerjee, you know the time-limit, and I hope you will be able to finish your speech within that.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: I would like to know where the Ministers have gone. On a matter like this, it is desirable that the Home Minister and the Food Minister should be present.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: There is also the scarcity of Ministers.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Chief Minister has gone out with my consent and he will be coming presently.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: I would submit that where on an adjournment motion such important questions have been raised at least courtesy demands that the Hon'ble Home Minister should be present if not the Food Minister also.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Chief Minister came to me and he has gone out with my permission for personal reasons. He will come back presently.

Mr. P. BANERJI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. I rise to support the motion so ably moved by my leader, Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy. The gagging of the press is there. The leaders of different groups in the Opposition have issued a statement, and the statement has been read here. We find that the statement is quite innocent, after the bungling and mismanagement of this Government in regard to the food situation. Mr. Hutchings has issued a statement, and there is no knowing when there will be a second famine. Already signs are there. Prices in the country-side after the recent harvest are rising very high and it is difficult to say, if this policy is pursued, what will be the price of foodstuffs next year. It is only reasonable on the part of the leaders who have the interests of the country at heart to see that the Government must not head for another crisis. This sort of irresponsible statements should not be made by a so-called responsible officer, the Food Secretary to the Government of India, in such an irresponsible way. My leader, Mr. Roy, has already explained the antecedents of Mr. Hutchings and how he was compelled to leave Bengal. Leaving Bengal he went to the

Government of India and from there he was sent to Burma. On the 23rd December he went in a motor car and brought the fleeing Indians back to Rangoon and on the 25th December Rangoon was bombed by the Japanese and these people succumbed to injuries received as a result of bombing. That was what he did. No man would ever believe that the statement that he had made was correct, and yet that had to be criticised. We all know how the situation was bungled by this Government and how about 50 lakhs of people died. If such a situation had taken place in an independent country what would have happened? People would have come forward and torn the Ministry responsible to pieces. Sir, some years ago there was a demonstration in front of the House of Commons in England. Even the ladies with babies in arms came to Parliament and asked the members of Parliament to clear out. They shouted: "Baby suckers, you are all unfit to carry on the administration of this country of ours. Resign, resign". Our Ministers, shameless as they are, have had the temerity to come forward and ban a statement issued by our distinguished leaders to cover their misdeeds. This Government should not be allowed to do such a thing for the simple reason that they claim to represent the people of the province. Mr. Siddiqi talked about Bengal and Muslims, and he was ably replied to by our Mayor. Yesterday's vote showed that this Government could carry on only with the help of white people who have no interest other than their own, in this country. Therefore, I should say, that the sooner this Government is removed the better it will be for all concerned.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there is no one in this House or outside who will dispute the proposition that the confidence of the people must be restored if the food situation is to be properly tackled in this province. But, Sir, confidence cannot and will not be restored by the pursuit of the gangster methods to which Government has already taken recourse. The statement which has been banned has been read out to the House by Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy.

Now, Sir, I wish some one on behalf of Government would have got up and pointed out which exactly was the passage or was the sentiment which was objected to by Government. Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, usually so powerful and vigorous, spoke like a tame lamb today. As a publicist and editor he knows, and none knows better than he, that what has been done is monstrous and without justification. Of course, a lucky man such as Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi is, his speeches are not only reported in newspapers but also printed and circulated at the cost of the poor tax-payers of Bengal and sent throughout India for the benefit of the firm of Ispahanis by Government itself. However, that is neither here nor there.

Now, Sir, what are the particular points which have been emphasized in the statement? In the first place it has been stated that Mr. Hutchings who came here did not take the trouble of making any contact with non-official public opinion. He came, he just visited some centres and went back to Delhi and said that everything was all right. Is that something which is prohibited under the Defence of India Rules? Is that something which, if criticised, must be banned by a rigorous order passed by the Home Department of the Government? What was the second statement? The second statement is that last year undue complacency practically covered the

Bengal horizon so far as the official actions were concerned and the blunder must not be repeated this year also. It is stated that there was only this sentence that there has been a bumper crop this year but already reports of rise in prices and scarcity of rice and paddy are daily pouring in from different parts of Bengal, especially from Comilla, Dacca and Chittagong. Now, is that the statement to which objection is taken by Government? Is that a statement which, according to Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, is not only not correct but wild and false? If it was so, then I could have understood Government allowing the publication of this statement but simultaneously issuing a communiqué that the facts were otherwise; that actually there has not been any rise in the price of rice or other foodgrains in those particular areas.

Now, Sir, very briefly, I can remind the House of the position as it stands today in this province. Mr. Suhrawardy speaking on 27th January, 1944, announced to a Press conference his main policy regarding procurement and distribution. There he stated these words—"We consider that the prevailing price of foodgrains is still very high, much higher than the majority of the people can afford: the price of foodgrains has outpassed the rise in price of other commodities. It will, therefore, be our endeavour to bring down the price of foodgrains to the same level which would be not unfair to the producer and which would be not unfair to the consumer as well. We have, therefore, to control prices effectively, to take anti-hoarding measures, to secure equitable distribution and to keep the markets constantly supplied with foodgrains." That was the policy of the Government announced on the 27th January, 1944. The Government of India had some difference with the Government of Bengal with regard to the procurement policy but ultimately the Government of India accepted the scheme propounded by the Government of Bengal and—mark the words which were uttered by the Food Member in New Delhi—he said that on the urgent representation of the Government of Bengal the Government of India decided not to override the decision of the Provincial Government on this point for which opinion the Bengal Government must accept full responsibility. We have heard a lot about political propaganda: we have heard a lot that whatever we say is actuated by political motives: Phillip Sober became Phillip Drunk and then was transformed into Phillip the Traitor and he spoke yesterday in the garb of the Finance Minister that there is a constant attempt on the part of the Opposition leaders to state falsely that there would be a famine again. We have never said that there is bound to be a famine, but we have said that conditions are so serious that unless you take proper steps immediately there may be a disaster and it will then be the entire responsibility of the Government of Bengal.

Now, Sir, leave aside statistics collected by private agents. On the 27th January, a statement was made by Mr. Suhrawardy that the price of rice was very high and that he was making an attempt every day to bring down the price level. Sir, I have got here analysed the statistics published in the *Calcutta Gazette*, not an official organ of the Opposition, from the 27th January till last Thursday. If you analyse the figures for 87 districts and subdivisions, you will find here that in 46 districts and subdivisions the price has remained steady. The price, already high in the opinion of

Mr. Suhrawardy himself, has not made any change whatsoever in 46 districts and subdivisions in Bengal during the last two weeks and in 23 districts and subdivisions it definitely shows a tendency towards rise. That is a fact—a fact disclosed by official bulletins.

Now, only two days ago an appeal was issued by the Ramkrishna Mission, not a political organisation, asking for funds for carrying on relief operations. Exactly what we have said in our statement has been stated in the statement issued by the Ramkrishna Mission which has been allowed to be published in Bengal, namely, that prices are rising and destitutes are pouring into towns, and everything indicates that unless things are properly tackled there may be another calamity. Only a week ago we received a frantic appeal for help from Chittagong where we are carrying on relief operations: There the price of rice came down to Rs. 18 in December but during the last six weeks the price has risen a great deal and the present rate is Rs. 26. We have no stock of rice in our possession in Chittagong. We asked the District Magistrate of Chittagong to give us a loan of 3,000 maunds of rice so that the relief centres might be served by us. But, Sir, this is the reply that we have got from the District Magistrate of Chittagong who is not in the employ of the Opposition here: "Your letter No. so and so, dated the 4th February, asking for a loan of 3,000 maunds of rice for relief. We are trying to conserve stocks for the next bad period. No loan can be allowed by us at present." And here we are told whatever we are saying is actuated by political motives. Here sit in office honourable gentlemen who supported by the European bloc raised the cry last year against the Ministry of 1943 that the price of rice was Rs. 13 or Rs. 14 per maund and the suffering of the people was unbearable; and when we are pointing out facts which indicate in 1944 that the current price of rice is causing deep anxiety, we are told that we are trying to make a political capital of the present situation.

The last point referred to in the statement is that there are large sections of people in the province who have no confidence in the present Ministry. That is a fact. What is the use of your trying to gag public opinion when public opinion wants to assert itself and say that there are sections of people who have no confidence in the present Ministry? You have a party Ministry in office. That party Ministry is carrying on its activities in a manner which has no concern with the welfare of the people, and if we point out these three salient facts in the statement, namely, that Mr. Hutchings came and expressed an opinion without consulting, without coming into touch with non-official public opinion, that there is a definite indication of rise of price in foodgrains in different parts of the province, and lastly that a Ministry which carries on its activities actuated by party consideration can never be able to restore confidence in the minds of the people, what is there that you want to ban in the manner in which you have done? Sir, I would ask Government to remember this, that if Government wants to shut out legitimate criticism of its food policy it will never be able to control the situation at all. If the Government's opinion is that what we have said infringes the provisions of the Defence of India Rules it is open to the Government to prosecute the writers of the statement or those who may publish those statements, but to use these methods

which are similar to the methods which are advertised to be the Japanese methods in the newspapers day in and day out is not certainly the way to restore public confidence.

Sir, I would warn the Government that it is following a course of action which will defeat the object which Government has in view. If you want that public confidence should be restored, the easiest and the best thing for you is to see that prices do come down in different parts of the province as quickly as possible. It is no use your trying to stifle public opposition. It is no use your trying to shut out public criticism by policies and acts which we honestly feel will not be conducive to popular interest. If you do so you will drive the movement underground, and what will be the result? Mr. Badruddoja read out some prophetic word which were uttered by Mr. Ispahani sitting here in the opposition last year That was when rice was selling at Rs. 13 15 per maund, and after this terrible experience in Bengal in 1943 when facts indicate that Government is bungling, that there is something rotten in the administration which makes it impossible for the Government to rouse the confidence of the people, you want to exercise your majority vote and say that everything is all right and you will not allow public opinion to express itself in any way whatsoever. I appeal, Sir, once again to Government to change its method and to change its policy.

There was no attempt on the part of the Home Minister to come into touch with those who wrote the statement. I could have understood the *bona fides* of the Home Minister if he held a consultation with the leaders of the different parties who are signatories to that statement, if he said "you are issuing a statement; here are our facts and the facts are entirely contrary to what you are stating and you should not allow the statement to be published, or if you do so we shall issue a contradiction as well", but if you do want to follow the much advertised Nazi methods and the methods of which you say the Japanese are guilty, then say so openly and put an end to hypocrisy. The sooner we know that the position now is that public opinion has to be gagged even though millions may suffer or die of starvation and misery, the better If you think that you can escape in this manner you will be living in that paradise which is known to be the Fools' Paradise.

Mr. DAVID HENDRY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I had no intention of taking any part in this debate but surprise has been expressed at the attitude which we have taken up in supporting the suggestion that this matter should not be discussed before the House and that if it were, the press should be asked to withdraw. It has been said that it is very surprising indeed that such a suggestion should come from this party which holds the freedom of the press in very high estimation. Indeed we do, Sir, but in Great Britain where the freedom of the press is held in estimation as high as in any other part of the world the policy at the present time is for food news which is regarded as hot news to be kept firmly under control and there is no country in the world where the food control policy has been more successful and more effective in every branch of its administration than in Great Britain. There is no country in the world where food news is more strictly controlled for official food news control is an essential part

of official food control. (Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: And equally bungled as here?) That bungling here for which Dr. Mookerjee continues to express a great deal of affection would be definitely assisted by the misinterpretation which is put upon many of the situations which arise in this country. Sir, the only point I wish to make is this, that the freedom of the press is by no means frustrated by the control of the food news which is published in this country. (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Suppression of food news?) Not suppression of food news, but strict control of food news.

There is one other point which has been made, and which I should like to answer now. We have been from time to time accused of turning the last Ministry out because it was unable to bring the price of rice or foodgrains in general down. We made our opposition perfectly clear last year, Sir, and I should like to re-affirm it now that when we assisted to turn the last Ministry out, we voted against them because we maintained, and rightly so I think, that they had not applied their minds to the crisis which was then approaching and they had done nothing whatsoever to take steps to prevent the famine which ultimately descended upon us. That was the sole reason why we voted against them. Up to that time we supported them and supported them fully but when we saw no intention whatsoever of their applying their minds and applying their abilities to controlling the situation we went against them. This Ministry *per contra* has applied its mind to the problems and crisis with great diligence and has improved the situation. That is the only point I wish to make in that connection and while the present Ministry continues to do its best conscientiously it will continue to receive our support.

Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS: Mr. Chairman, the adjournment motion has been moved by the Leader of the Congress Party, Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy, on the ground that the Government has tried to stifle public opinion by banning the publication of the statement made by the different leaders of the Opposition, and he has tried to stand on the ground that by banning the statement the Government has denied the right of expression of opinion and the Government has tried to show that they cannot tolerate any difference with the Government. Nobody will deny the fact, Sir, that everybody has the right to express his opinion, but at the same time it has to be seen whether the opinion which is going to be expressed is *bona fide* or not, whether the right which is going to be exercised is really the right or is going to be an abuse of the right.

Sir, the Government has tried to do this thing on the ground that the publication of the statement will create a panicky situation in the country. The publication of the statement is nothing but an attempt on the part of the Opposition leaders to create panic in the minds of the people and in this way to make a political capital.

Sir, Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee who is all along reputed to carry on propaganda to incite the feelings against the present Government, he is all along publishing the statement that the only solution for this is an all-parties Government. It is an attempt on his part to come into the Cabinet which he had been compelled to leave.

Now, Sir, I have already said that everybody has got a right to express his opinion and, at the same time, whether it is really freedom of expression or it is a licence has to be seen first of all. By publishing that statement, an attempt was made to create a situation which would help to bring about a crisis in the country. Sir, it is a well known fact that Government is doing its best to solve the food situation, and the last famine on which stress has been laid by the Opposition is really the creation of the Government which went out of power. Sir, I did not like to mention that fact. It was really the commencement from the time when you, Sir (addressing Mr. Fazlul Huq who was in the Chair), as the Premier of this province made that significant statement at the Delhi Conference about Bengal's food situation. After that, Sir, you have played questionable games when your Government took part in distributing favours by way of distributing controlled shops. It is your Government, Sir, which was responsible for really bungling the affair. It is your Government, Sir, which was responsible for encouraging people like Kali Babu. In this way, Sir, the situation created and for that bungling of the affair the last Government had to walk out and the present Government came into office. The present Government is doing its level best to cope with the situation, but unfortunately for the country gentlemen like Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerji and his other friends were always trying to create a situation which could not be managed. It was their political game and they played the political game with a view to regain power but really it was an attempt with the lives of millions of the people. The Leader of the Krishak Proja party Mr. Shamsuddin has said that 40 lakhs of people have lost their lives. Forty lakhs of people died of starvation. It is a very regrettable thing, but who is responsible for this. I again maintain, Sir, that it is the bungling of the situation by the past Government which is really responsible for this. It is their misdoings and misdeeds which are really responsible for creating a situation like this.

I again say that the irresponsibility of the Opposition has been seen in many things. I hope the House will remember that when this Government tried to bring the situation, so far as the destitutes and beggars are concerned, under control and provided them with shelters, the cry was raised by the Leaders of the Opposition including you, Sir, that Government was mishandling the matter. It was a political game. It was a game which was played by you and other members of the Opposition. (At this stage the member reached the time-limit.)

(At this stage the House was adjourned for 15 minutes.)

(After adjournment.)

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, I have listened very carefully to the speeches that have been delivered today and the impression that is created in my mind is one of surprise and this again has been caused on account of two things. First the general impression or ignorance about the effect of the statement that had been made and proposed to be made with regard to the food situation, and secondly, about the policy of Government with regard to the right of freedom of speech and freedom of action. I would, Sir, deal with these two points later on. At the outset

I want to make it quite clear that Government have passed no orders, but at a Press conference we gave an indication of our policy to the Press and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Press for the co-operation we have received from them in this matter. As far as this particular subject-matter of the adjournment motion is concerned, here again the Press asked for our advice and we advised them not to do it. There was no definite order on this matter. Therefore as we have given no definite order, if any statement is published by the Press in a quite *bona fide* manner, I do not think Government can be accused for allowing a statement of that kind to be published, as has been stated by Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee with regard to the appeal of Ramkrishna Mission. I may say this that we have made it clear to the Press that as far as attack on Government and its policy is concerned, they have full liberty to criticise the Ministry as such and they have got full liberty to say what they like about the Ministry. The only exception is made with regard to one item and that is the food policy of the present Government (Cries of "oh, oh" from the Opposition benches). The whole field of Government administration is open to your criticism and your attack and the Press have taken advantage of it and have attacked us mercilessly (A voice: And deservedly) and undeservedly and never have we taken any action against them. But as regards the question of food it is absolutely on a different plane. Here it is not the Ministry that is going to be injured by this, but it is the teeming millions of Bengal (Cries of "oh, oh" from the Opposition benches), whose lives are going to be sacrificed indirectly in making this Ministry the base of your attack.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: As you served them last year.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: As far as that is concerned, both Mr. Hendry and Mr. Abdur Rahman Siddiqi have, I think, very pertinently pointed out who is responsible and what happened last year.

Sir, as I said before, the surprise is that of all persons Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee should be the one man who should accuse this Government of gagging and of adopting gangster methods. He forgets that my policy has always been to give him the greatest latitude in attacking and abusing the Government throughout Bengal and outside, and in spite of the fact of my being advised that I should take action against him, I have always refrained from using the Defence of India Act against one who is my political opponent and who is trying to attack me as far as my action in the Ministry is concerned. I maintain and I have always maintained that this Ministry shall not abuse the Defence of India Act and Rules as has been abused by the previous Ministry. I appeal to the members to give me a patient hearing because this is a vital question affecting the people of this province. It is quite possible that the leaders of the Opposition and the gentlemen who have spoken and those who have been signatories to the statement honestly and conscientiously may have thought that their statements and their speeches are absolutely innocent, that they are merely pointing out what they apprehend as likely to happen and that they are merely trying to draw the attention of Government to a serious situation that may arise. We are prepared to concede that that is what they perhaps

honestly believe but what these gentlemen forget and what I cannot understand is unless it be that they are all the time in Calcutta and do not know what happens in the mufassil and how the cultivators and the agriculturists are affected by their statements from time to time. Sir, I have recently been touring in the mufassil and I have been in contact with not only the Muslim supporters of this Government but non-Muslims of all shades of opinion. I may say here what my experience has been—and it is also the experience of my colleague, the Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy, who has been doing extensive touring recently—that wherever we have gone in Bengal we have found the utmost co-operation and support from all sections of the people of this province and it has struck me most forcibly that in spite of the agitation and propaganda from Calcutta by a certain section of politically-minded people, the general masses belonging to all communities, Hindus, Scheduled Castes, and Muslims, are most anxious to give their co-operation and support to the present Ministry. And they desire us to help them in solving this very difficult problem. I may say that on all our food committees we have representatives of all political organisations and of all communities. Addresses have been presented to us not only by the Muslim League Party but by Hindus and Mussalmans in almost all the places we have visited. (Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Then why are you afraid of that statement?) Let me come back to this. I may tell you how the reaction has been on the minds of the cultivators by the spread of statements of a likelihood of another famine next year and of the rise in prices. In Magura the price of rice was prevailing between 13 or 14 and then when the rumour began to spread that a large number of gunny bags had arrived and that Government were going to purchase, immediately the price of rice went up to Rs. 16 and Rs. 18. (Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: Who spread that rumour?) I have been told on a reliable authority that the reports published by the "News Chronicle" of London had the most disastrous effect in Bengal as far as prices are concerned. (Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: On the cultivators?) Yes, because that was broadcast. Immediately the dealers and agriculturists stopped bringing the rice and paddy into the markets and *hats*. I do not like to impress upon the members of the House that we are going through a very serious situation —not merely with regard to the food problem but there are hundred and one problems that we have been faced with on account of the situation that is not absolutely the work of Government—and that we are almost in the war zone. Sir, as things are, I want the members of the Opposition to realise that not merely the question of food but the political future of India rests on how we, Indians, can tackle a situation like the present one successfully, and I must state here that the situation with which we are faced, the difficulties with which we are faced at the present time will prove a difficult problem to any Government of any country if they were placed in a similar situation facing a similar problem. I think that this is not the time when members of the Opposition should make statements as has been made by one gentleman today—rice has disappeared, prices are mounting, etc. They look very innocent. (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: They are all facts.) The general effect on our cultivators is that he thinks that if he can only withhold the stock from the market he will get a better price. Sir, these gentlemen of the Opposition do not

realise that the Government of India in their food policy for the whole of India have laid down one essential condition, namely, procurement of food by Government and the gentlemen opposite are absolutely against that policy. They are doing propaganda amongst the cultivators and asking them not to sell their rice to Government. This is the position they have taken up, whereas the whole scheme is based on procurement and successful procurement by Government. The members of the Opposition claim the right to go and tell the cultivator "No, you must not sell to the Government (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: "No, no"). I am surprised that the members here say "no". (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: It is a malicious statement.) In view of what has been said by the members of the Opposition yesterday about the voting we would like to have the decision of the House on this adjournment motion.

The motion of Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy that this Assembly do now adjourn to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance and of recent occurrence, namely, the banning by the Government of Bengal of the publication in the Press of the joint statement issued by the Leaders of the parties in the Opposition in the Bengal Legislative Assembly criticising the observations of the Food Secretary, Government of India, on the food situation in Bengal, as published recently in the local newspapers, was then put and a division taken with the following result:—

AYES—79.

Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mia.
Abdul Hamid Shah, Maulvi.
Abdul Kader, Mr. (alias Lal Meah).
Abdul Majid, (Mymensingh).
Abdul Wahed, Maulvi.
Abdur Razzak, Maulvi.
Ahmed Khan, Mr. Syed.
Aimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Anwar Ali, Maulvi.
Badruddoja, Mr. Syed.
Banerjee, Mr. Pramatha Nath.
Banerji, Mr. P.
Barat Ali, Mr. Md.
Barma, Mr. Puspajit.
Barman, Mr. Upendra Nath.
Basu, Mr. Santosh Kumar.
Bhowmik, Dr. Gobinda Chandra.
Biswas, Mr. Surendra Nath.
Chattopadhyay, Mr. Haripada.
Chaudhuri, Rai Harendra Nath.
Das, Babu Radhanath.
Das Gupta, Dr. J. M.
Das Gupta, Srijut Narendra Nath.
Datta, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Dolui, Mr. Harendra Nath.
Dutta, Mr. Sukumar.
Dutta Gupta, Miss Mira.
Edhar, Mr. Upendranath.
Fazlul Huq, Mr. A. K.
Ghose Mr. Atul Krishna.
Giasuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Golam Rabbani Ahammad, Maulvi.
Gupta, Mr. Jogesh Chandra.
Gyasuddin Ahmed Choudhury, Alhadj.
Habibullah, Nawab Bahadur K., of Dacca.
Hasan Ali Choudhury, Mr. Syed.
Hashem Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Hirik Ahmed Mia, Maulvi.
Jahiruddin Hashemy, Mr. Syed.
Jonab Ali Majumdar, Maulvi.
Khan Mr. Debendra Lall.
Kundu, Mr. Nishitha Nath.
Lahiri, Babu Ashutosh.
Maji, Mr. Adwaita Kumar.
Majumdar, Mrs. Hemaprova.
Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra.
Maqbul Hosain, Mr.
Mookerjee, Dr. Syamaprasad.
Muhammad Afzal, Khan Bahadur Maulvi Syed.
Muhammad Sulaiman, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Mukerji, Mr. Dhirendra Narayan.
Mukherji, Dr. Sharat Chandra.
Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh.
Mustafa Ali Dewan, Maulvi.
Naskar, Mr. Hem Chandra.
Paul, Sir Hari Sankar.
Poddar, Mr. Anandilal.
Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. M. L.
Ramizuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Charu Chandra.
Roy, Mr. Kamalkrishna.
Roy, Mr. Kiran Sankar.
Roy, Mr. Manmatha Nath.
Roy, Mr. Patiram.
Sanaullah, Dr.
Sanyal, Dr. Nalinaksha.
Sanyal, Mr. Sasanka Sekhar.
Sen, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Sen, Jogesh Chandra, Rai Bahadur.
Sen-Gupta, Mrs. Nellie.
Shamsuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khondkar, Mr.
Sinha, Srijut Manindra Bhusan.
Sur, Mr. Narendra Kumar.
Thakur, Mr. Pramathe Ranjan.
Tofel Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi Haji.
Wahiur Rahman, Maulvi.
Yousuf Mirza.
Zaman, Mr. A. M. A.

NOES—99.

Abdul Aziz, Maulana Md.
Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.
Abdul Hakim, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri, Maulvi Md.
Abdul Hamid, Mr. A. M.
Abdul Karim, Mr.
Abdul Latif Biswas, Maulvi.
Abdul Mollaeb Malik, Dr.
Abdul Wahab Khan, Khan Bahadur.
Abdulla-Al Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. F. M.
Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, Mr.
Abdur Rashid Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rasheed, Maulvi Md.
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Maulvi S. (Howrah).
Abdus Shaheed, Maulvi Md.
Abul Fazl, Mr. Md.
Abul Masud, Kazi.
Abul Quasem, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali Mridha, Maulvi.
Ahmed Hossain, Mr.
Alfazuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Amir Ali Mia, Maulvi Md.
Barma, the Hon'ble Mr. Premhari.
Barman, Babu Shyama Prosad.
Biswas, Babu Lakshmi Narayan.
Biswas, Mr. Rasik Lal.
Chakrabarty, Babu Narendra Narayan.
Chippendale, Mr. J. W.
Clark, Mr. I. A.
Das, Rai Sahib Anukul Chandra.
Das, Rai Sahib Kirit Bhusan.
Das, Mr. Manmohan.
Dass, Babu Debendra Nath.
Farhad Raza Chowdhury, Mr. M.
Farhat Bano Khanam, Begum.
Fazlul Quadir, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Dacca).
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Mymensingh).
Gladding, Mr. D., C.I.E.
Gomes, Mr. R. A.
Goswami, the Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra.
Gupta, Mr. J. N.
Hafizuddin Choudhuri, Maulvi.
Hamiduddin Ahmad, Khan Sahib.
Hamilton, Mr. K. A.
Hasina Murshed, Mrs., M.B.E.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Haywood, Mr. Rogers.
Hendry, Mr. David.
Ispahani, Mr. M. A. H., M.B.E.
Jalaluddin Ahmad, the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi
Jasimuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kabiruddin Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kazem Ali Mirza, Sahibzada Kawan Jah Syed.
Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Leick, Mr. John.
McGregor, Mr. G. G.
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Khan Sahib Maulvi (Tippera).
Mandal, Mr. Amrita Lal.
Mandal, Mr. Banku Behari.
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra.
Mandal, the Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath.
Mandal, Mr. Krishna Prasad.
Manirudden Akhand, Maulvi.
Mohammed Ali, Khan Bahadur.
Moslem Ali Mollah, Maulvi M.
Muhammad Abdul Halim Molla, Mr.
Muhammad Ishaque, Maulvi.
Muhammad Israil, Maulvi.
Muhammad Siddique, Khan Bahadur Dr. Syed.
Mukerjea, the Hon'ble Mr. Tarakanath, M.B.E.
Mullick, Mr. Mukunda Behary.
Mullick, the Hon'ble Mr. Pulin Behary.
Musharruff Hossain, the Hon'ble Nawab, Khan Bahadur
Nasarullah, Nawabzada K.
Nazimuddin, the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir, K.C.I.E.
Nooruddin, Mr. K.
Pain, the Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prosanna.
Razaur Rahman Khan, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Dhananjoy.
Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Safiruddin Ahmed, Haji.
Sahabo-Alam, Mr. Syed.
Sarkar, Babu, Madhusudan.
Serajul Islam, Mr.
Shahedali, Mr.
Singha, Babu Kshetra Nath.
Sirdar, Babu Litta Munda.
Skipwith, Mr. W. E.
Stark, Mr. A. F.
Suhrawardy, the Hon'ble Mr. H. S.
Tamizuddin Khan, the Hon'ble Mr.
Thorman, Mr. G. M.
Walker, Mr. J. R.
Walker, Mr. W. A. M., C.B.E.
Whitehead, Mr. R. B.
Wordsworth, Mr. W. C., C.I.E.
Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr.

The Ayes being 79 and the Noes 99, the motion was lost.

Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned at 7-25 p.m. till 4-45 p.m. on Friday, the 3rd March 1944, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Friday, the 3rd March, 1944, at 4-45 p.m.

Present:

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI) in the Chair, 12 Hon'ble Ministers and 175 members.

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Public women in Bengal.

*143. **Mr. NIHARENDU DUTT MAZUMDAR:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) the number of registered public women in Bengal on the 31st August, 1939,—

(1) in Calcutta and suburbs, and

(2) in the rest of the Province,

giving the number for each district; and

(*ii*) the present number up to the latest available date, showing the increase or decrease in each district?

(*b*) If the number is on the increase, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what are the causes contributing to such increases?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any records are kept of the birth of children of such women?

(*d*) If the answer to (*c*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) what is the number of such child-births for the last five years from 1939 to 1943, up to date—

(1) in Calcutta and suburbs, and

(2) in the rest of the Province

for each district; and

(*ii*) what arrangements, if any, Government have got for the salvage, education and employment of such children?

MINISTER in charge of the HOME DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) (*i*) Nil.

(*ii*), (*b*), (*c*) and (*d*) Do not arise.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state——

Point of Order.

Maulvi MD. ISRAIL: On a point of order, Sir. May I know whether these cloths (pointing to Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal's table) can be allowed to

be placed in the Assembly Chamber? I do not think there is any such provision in the rules.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, may I be permitted to explain the position?

Maulvi MD. ISRAIL: Sir, I have not yet finished my submission. I want to know whether there is any provision in the rules for bringing cloths or other things in this chamber. Dr. Sanyal has brought cloths today, and he may bring other things, a hundred other things, tomorrow in the chamber when it will be made a bazar. So, I seek the protection of the Chair to keep the dignity of the Assembly Chamber so that these things may not be brought here either for exhibition or for other purposes. I want your ruling.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of personal explanation, Sir. I have brought in these three thans of cloth printed by the Ralli Brothers. They were being black-marketed at high prices in the Burrabazar area with the mark of the Provincial Textile Controller and these have been marked with back dates. Sir, I gave you notice of an adjournment motion in this connection.

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Sir, will you please ask him to remove these things?

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not desirable that any matter or anything which has got no relation whatsoever to the subject-matter before the House should be brought in. I do not know for what purpose Dr. Sanyal has brought in these cloths. He wanted my consent for an adjournment motion.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, these are materials in that connection to convince the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have refused consent and I do not know whether he has got my order or not. Perhaps in that connection he brought these (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes, Sir) and as I have refused my consent, I think these cloths may be removed from here.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: They will be removed when I go away. These cloths will not be given away to anybody. They will be removed by me in due course.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Sir, that leaves open the question whether you will allow material exhibits in future. I think the word of an honourable member in this House ought to be quite sufficient without his having to display the exhibits which he might like the House to see.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sometimes we cannot agree and sometimes even facts are challenged.

Mr. SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, will you kindly place them beneath your table?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, as I have explained, these were materials in connection with my adjournment motion and I wanted to convince the House with them.

[Dr. Sanyal put the cloths beneath the desk.]

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: May I know from the honourable member whether it is for the purpose of publication in the press that he has brought them into the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: May I just now ask with regard to the last question put by the Hon'ble Minister of Civil Supplies whether he has put that question out of his nervousness so that rice of inferior quality which is being sold in ration shops may not be exhibited in this House?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order please. There should be no discussion on this subject.

Supplementary to Starred Question No. 143.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether public women are registered by Government in Bengal?

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: No.

Sale of denial paddy in Goalundo subdivision.

***144. Mr. AHMED ALI MRIDHA:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Civil Supplies Department be pleased to state whether any stock of denial paddy has been placed in the subdivision of Goalundo?

(*b*) If so, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) the quantity; and

(*ii*) the place where it has been so placed?

(*c*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any order for sale of those paddy to the people was made?

(*d*) If the answer to (*c*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) of what quantity the order for sale was made;

(*ii*) the dates when the orders were communicated to the Subdivisional Officer;

(*iii*) whether the paddy have been sold in full;

(*iv*) whether the sale was effected in parts; and

(*v*) if so, the date when the sale of the first as well as the subsequent instalments was completed?

MINISTER in charge of the CIVIL SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy): (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) (*i*) 4,654 maunds and 32 seers.

(*ii*) In charge of the Agent at Dunlop Hall, Rajbari.

(*c*) Yes.

(*d*) (*i*) For the whole quantity.

(*ii*) 13th November, 1942, and 18th March, 1943.

(*iii*) and (*iv*) Yes

(v) The dates with quantities are given below :—

Date.		Quantity.	
		Md.	sr.
15-12-42	...	1,000	0
18-12-42	...	500	0
20-3-43	...	300	0
23-3-43	...	300	0
24-3-43	...	775	0
26-3-43	...	625	0
27-3-43	...	770	0
1-4-43	...	150	0
5-4-43	...	90	0
7-4-43	...	80	0
10-4-43	...	10	0
14-4-43	...	54	32
Total	...	4,654	32

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether this paddy was sold to the traders or to the consumers?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: So far as I am aware, this paddy was sold to the consumers.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state at what price this paddy was sold and whether the rate was uniform all throughout the four months?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: This paddy was sold at the price at which paddy was ordered to be sold through the controlled shops. The price must have changed with the time of sale.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Sir, I want to know the definite rate at which it was sold.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: That I cannot give you.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state from whom this paddy was requisitioned?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: This is the denial paddy.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state from which district the paddy was requisitioned?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: That is not possible for me to say. A stock of the denial paddy was placed in the subdivision of Goalundo, but it will be impossible for me to trace its source.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Sir, my question has not been replied. The Hon'ble Minister says that it is denial paddy, but the denial area cannot be an abstract thing——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order, you need not discuss it. In the last answer he has explained the whole thing very clearly.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state which denial area it was and who was the particular gentleman from whom this paddy was requisitioned.

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Denial paddy was not requisitioned paddy. The question does not arise.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Sir, I would draw your attention to the form in which the question has been put and to the form in which it has been replied.

Mr. SPEAKER: Have you got any supplementary question to put?

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: My question is from whom it was requisitioned.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Minister has submitted and I agree with him that the supplementary question does not arise out of the question as framed.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Sir, on this point I may state for the information of this House that this denial paddy was acquired by Government during the time when we were not in office. So far as I am aware this denial paddy was not requisitioned, it was purchased.

Mr. ATUL KRISHNA GHOSE: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what were the rates at which this paddy was sold on different dates beginning from 15th December, 1942, and ending on the 14th April, 1943? Whether all the rates were uniform and controlled rates?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order, he has already given his replies. Questions over.

Enquiry regarding adjournment motion.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I gave notice of an adjournment motion regarding black-marketing of certain cotton piecegoods by Ralli Brothers with the stamp of the Provincial Textile Controller. I have not received your consent. I would like to know whether I can repeat that. It may be that you have not given your consent, because today is a non-official day and in that case I crave your indulgence for waiving the urgency.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: On a point of order and on a point of privilege. I would request you, Sir, not to allow this sort of backdoor methods in order to obtain permission. A statement has been made by the honourable member here which he could not have made on the floor of the House, because you have refused your consent. Nevertheless the honourable member by putting a certain question has tried to put it on record. I would request you, Sir, that you will have that statement made by the honourable member, which is against all propriety and against the privileges of this House, expunged.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That is an astounding proposal. We have heard of many attempts of the present Government to suppress news and views, but this is the most astounding proposal of all.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: If the honourable member has got any charge to make against any firm, I shall be very glad to

investigate it and there is no firm against which I would not take serious steps if the charge were definitely established, but I do object to the honourable member's bandying words like this and casting aspersions against persons. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Your European friends.) Europeans or Indians do not matter. I would have done exactly the same thing had the honourable member cast such an aspersion against an Indian firm of repute. It is not fair to any firm that aspersions like this should be made without proper investigation. The honourable member should not have made this remark.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I have investigated and I have got materials to satisfy you.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will you please resume your seat, Dr. Sanyal? There have been actually two speeches—one by you and the other by the Hon'ble Minister in a matter for which I refused consent. However, let us now proceed with the business.

NON-OFFICIAL MEMBERS' BILLS.

The Bengal Supervision of Orphanage and Widows' Home Bill, 1940.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Sir, I beg to present the report of the Select Committee on the Bengal Supervision of Orphanage and Widows' Home Bill, 1940

[Mr. Speaker called the Bengal Rent Reduction (Temporary Provisions) Bill, 1940.]

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: What about consideration and passing of the Bill?

Mr. SPEAKER: That will come later on.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir. Before other stages actually come, I think, as soon as a Bill is presented before the House by one of the Ministers that should be open to discussion by all.

Mr. SPEAKER: After presentation some stage comes, namely, a motion comes either for consideration or for some other purpose.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Sir, presentation itself is a motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand that that is not the practice.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Any way I hope you will allow us to make general observations.

Mr. SPEAKER: You will make general observations when item No. IX will be taken up. You will have an opportunity of discussing the whole provisions of the Bill at that stage.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Why not earlier?

Mr. SPEAKER: It will be open to you for discussion at that stage. Of course I have not looked into the rules very carefully, but I understand that that is the practice.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: On a point of order, Sir. This Bill ought to be the first in the list of business today, because it is in

its most advanced stage having come from the Select Committee whereas all the other Bills on the agenda have not yet gone through the Select Committee stage. Therefore it should have the first precedence over all other Bills.

Mr. SPEAKER: Certainly it has been placed as the first item. So far as other Bills are concerned, namely, from item No. III to item No. VII, they are only presentation of the *ad interim* report of the Select Committee.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: May I submit, Sir, in support of Mr. Sanyal's contention and Sir Nazimuddin's arguments that it would be convenient for all sides of the House to take up the consideration of the Bill now, because items Nos. III to VII raise certain controversial points which, I submit, have to be first disposed of, and we do not want to embarrass you at this stage.

Mr. SPEAKER: Well, that is another matter.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir. We would like this Bill to be finished before any other Select Committee report may be sought to be presented for reasons that I would state later on on a subsequent occasion.

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Sir, I would like to draw your attention to rule 58 under which the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Bill will present before the House the report of the Select Committee and then the member in charge of the Bill will also move a motion for taking the Bill into consideration. Therefore, in and between these two stages, no question arises as to the discussion on the merits of the Bill.

(Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal rose on a point of order.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you speaking on that point of order?

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Yes, Sir. I am afraid my whole contention has been misunderstood. As soon as the Bill is presented before the House, the House is accosted with the Bill and the whole question is whether we are prepared to meet it or not. Since we are prepared to meet it I do not know where is the provision of the Bill which prevents a member from having an opportunity to make observations, as soon as it is presented.

Mr. SPEAKER: Apart from all these questions I am not quite prepared for these things. I do not think there will be any harm whatsoever if we take up this Bill, viz., the Bengal Supervision of Orphanage and Widows' Home Bill, 1940, and there is nothing in the rules which debar me from postponing the other items. So, I think that it would be better if we take the Bengal Supervision of Orphanage and Widows' Home Bill, and finish it. Is there any objection to it on this side of the House?

(No objection.)

Begum FARHUT BANO KHANAM: Sir, I beg to move that the Bengal Supervision of Orphanage and Widows' Home Bill, 1940, as reported by the Select Committee be taken into consideration.

When I introduced this Bill and when the Bill was referred to a Select Committee I explained the need for legislation to control the working of orphanages and widows homes and other similar institutions. The need for this legislation has become all the more necessary and urgent in view of the

post-famine conditions prevailing in the province. For some time past there has been some public agitation regarding traffic in destitute women and girls as a result of the famine. An expert survey which was conducted recently has disclosed that as a result of distress and destitution there had been more deaths among adult males than adult females. This means that a large number of women have lost their husbands, parents or guardians. It is therefore natural to apprehend that these women will fall an easy prey to social vices and may therefore ultimately fall into the hands of designing persons who may trade in these helpless women. As I mentioned in my previous speech, there are in existence a good number of institutions who carry on clandestine traffic in women and girls. They manage to evade detection as their nefarious activities are conducted under cover of institutions so camouflaged as to give an appearance of social and philanthropic establishments. In the circumstances it is essential that all institutions which board or keep women or girls or children should be effectively controlled and supervised. At the time when my Bill was introduced in this Assembly I received the support of all sections of the House. But strangely enough at the instance of some interested parties a newspaper agitation against my Bill was carried on for some time with the object of torpedoing it altogether. But I want to make it clear that there is nothing in the provisions of the Bill which will in any way restrict or hamper the activities of genuine and *bona fide* institutions. On the other hand, all such institutions should welcome rather than object to supervision and control as provided for in the Bill, for there are in existence, apart from institutions of a questionable character, homes and orphanages run purely for the purpose of making profit. Such institutions thrive upon public charity at the cost of genuine and philanthropic organisations because they divert to themselves charities and donations which otherwise would go to *bona fide* institutions. This should be one strong reason why all genuine institutions should welcome the enactment of legislation proposed by me. In my original Bill there was a provision which made it compulsory for institutions to have sufficient reserve fund to run the establishment for a certain minimum period. In response to suggestions and requests received from several quarters I have agreed to the deletion of this provision so that this may not operate harshly against poor but genuine institutions. The other changes made by the Select Committee are drafting ones but otherwise all provisions embodied in my Bill have been retained. I hope that the Bill will be passed in its entirety.

With these words I commend my motion to the acceptance of the House.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, if I take this opportunity of talking upon the Bill as proposed to be taken into consideration by the revered lady, my good friend over there, it is not because I do not appreciate the altruistic motives which have inspired the honourable member there, but because I feel that in her anxiety to do good to a section of the people she has probably disregarded or overlooked the dangerous consequences with which her motion is fraught. I understand that the honourable member who is the authoress of this Bill has got a good deal of influence in the party which is behind Government and that her voice counts a lot in the treasury benches also. But in her speech which she has just

delivered on the floor of the House she has given no indication as to how far Government was consulted on those questions and how far she has been able to persuade the Government to deal with the evils referred to by her in a practical way. It would be better if instead of bringing this Bill herself she had persuaded the Government to bring a Bill on similar lines, because if the Government brought this Bill they could not merely ask for the provisions of licence and control. They would have at the same time to be charged with the responsibility and liability of substantially helping these institutions. If the Government had brought a Bill of this description we could have put a straight question to the Treasury Benches as to what the Government proposed to do in the matter of giving nutrition to these organisations while seeking to extend control and patronage over them. Sir, I do not differ from the respected lady member when she says that there are certain evils which have overtaken and invaded the sacred organisations as such, but I would ask that honourable member, the mover, to consider as to what these evils are due to. In the first place there is no human institution from which evils can be eradicated altogether. Even the temples of religion and learning are not free from some evil or other, but in order to make out a good case for Government control and restriction upon preeminently benevolent social institutions the House has got to be satisfied that the evils are of such a nature that some such control would be indispensable, and that without Government intervention such social institutions could not function. If my good friend, the mover, carefully analysed some of the institutions which are the subject matter of her Bill she would readily find that most of the evils that have crept into these organisations are evils due to lack of interest taken by Government whatever the description may be. The Government or, for the matter of that, members behind the Government expect these institutions to be free from evils, free from corruption and to be of real service to the community. It is up to the Government to see, it is up to the members behind the Government to see that the Government also stand by these organisations. It is exactly on this vital matter that the Bill is silent and therefore it is difficult for us, in spite of our regard for the mover of the motion, to accept the Bill in its present shape and dimension. If the Bill provided for compulsory subsidy from the Government, if the Bill provided for assistance compulsorily to be rendered by the Government, then, of course, it would have been fit and proper for the mover of the Bill to have asked the House to accord its support to it. The Bill does not propose to deal with the problems of the institutions themselves, but on the other hand the Bill seeks to extend the reins of the Government to areas and jurisdictions beyond their ordinary forum. These orphanages, widows' homes and marriage bureaus which are referred to in this Bill are admittedly very welcome social institutions and, but for them, many a stranded orphan, many a stranded woman would probably have perished for want of legitimate assistance from society, and persons who have set up such organisations have done so in the best interests of the society and if they have flourished and survived up to the present day, they have done so in spite of Government apathy, and they have done so primarily due to the sustenance that has been given to them from non-official private charity and private generosity. Government admittedly has not yet taken pains to help these institutions in any way, but to jump into

the proposition that Government should have control and domination over these institutions is, to say the least of it, unjust and fraught with dangerous consequences. After all, since the Government do not propose to take up any responsibility what will be the effect of this Bill if it is passed into law. The effect will be that private organisations, charitable organisations, organisations meant for public benefit which have stood and grown and developed through private resources will be brought under Government domination. I would ask the mover of the Bill as to whether this is just and fair. I hope she will not misunderstand me, I hope the members of the Government party will not misunderstand me when I say that when a Government which is a party Government, whatever may be the restrictions to be imposed, is not charged with the responsibility of paying anything to the organisations, it is given the liberty of controlling and dominating such social institutions. And it is very likely more likely than not—that Government will get these organisations as so many new grounds for getting their own sphere extended where probably in the ordinary course they could not have done so. I would therefore like this Bill to be further examined by the whole House. There are eleven clauses in this Bill and some of them are only preliminary and some consequential. The substantive provision made in the Bill is the prohibition to open and carry on an orphanage or widows' home or a marriage bureau without permission of Government. Sir, I do not find either in ethics or anywhere else any good ground to support this measure. On the other hand I submit that a Bill of this controversial nature might prejudicially affect many useful institutions, might without really doing any good to the organisations themselves have the undesirable effect of extending Government influence of a party Government over an extensive field of social activities. It is a highly contentious and controversial Bill and so I hope that the honourable mover will be pleased to consider the matter afresh and will probably persuade herself to withdraw the Bill; if not, I am sorry to say that we will have to withdraw our support from it.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the author of the Bill deserves the thanks of all sections of the House for bringing before the Assembly a matter which vitally concerns the welfare of one section of the unfortunate people of this province, especially at this juncture when the question of protection of orphans and widows has assumed considerable importance. While therefore there is complete sympathy with the motive which has prompted the formulation of this Bill, there are certain important questions which require further consideration, and I am asking the mover to agree, if that is possible, that this Bill may be taken up on the next Non-official Bill day and there may be some agreed amendments which may seek to improve the Bill in several important directions.

Now, Sir, one important omission which I find has got to be rectified is this: there is a provision here for granting licence to these Homes. Now, supposing the persons who are responsible for the management of the Homes have been acting in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the Homes, the licence has to be withdrawn. Well and good. But what happens to the Homes themselves? There is no provision at all that it will be the responsibility of either the Government or somebody else to take the

administration of the Home and not to throw the inmates into the streets. That is an important provision which has got to be provided for. Again, Sir, there is no provision for granting any financial assistance to these Orphanages. Now, those of us who are connected with these organisations know how difficult it is to maintain these Homes at a reasonable state of efficiency without adequate funds. Now, I believe, if both the Opposition and the Government party agree, Government may be persuaded to make some provision for financial assistance to these Homes, at any rate to those which are run in accordance with the satisfaction of the Government.

Then, again, Sir, there are provisions here that detailed rules can be framed by Government. Now, the general principles on which the rules can be framed should be outlined, there should be some indication given as to how far those rules will entitle the Government to interfere with the detailed management of these institutions for the running of which Government does not claim to have any responsibility whatsoever. There is a provision here that not only the Commissioner of Police and the District Magistrate but anybody authorised by them—anybody authorised by the Commissioner of Police or the District Magistrate—may at any time, during day or night, enter into the premises for such enquiry as such a person may wish to make. I know there may be occasions which may necessitate sudden inspection but the character of the Homes being what it is, there should be some provision that the persons who come to inspect the Homes where women reside at any time during day or night should be of such status and responsibility as would not create further difficulty in the situation. I do not wish to go into further details but I would say once again that all sections of the House have every sympathy with the object of this Bill. I know it may be said in retort that the Bill was introduced four years ago and already four valuable years have passed. That is unfortunate. I do not wish to enquire as to who have been responsible for this, but once having lost these four years' time and having gained tremendous experience during the last few months with regard to the management of such Homes it is necessary that this Bill, before it passes into law from this Chamber, should be such as would be acceptable to all sections of the people, both inside the Assembly and outside.

For these reasons, Sir, I would suggest to the honourable the mover that there is this definite understanding that we shall not allow this matter to go beyond this session; we shall bring it up in course of this session. Do not take it up today. We need not refer it back formally to the Select Committee but we could sit round the table, have some amendments which will be mutually acceptable to both sides and then carry this measure unanimously from this House.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Mr. Speaker, I wish we could discuss problems in this House in the spirit in which we are discussing the one before us today. One gentleman opposite suggested withdrawal; the honourable member for the University suggests postponement; I am terrified. You know the fate of the Secondary Education Bill. Committees, conferences, discussions, negotiations, were carried on interminably and then the Bill was brought forward, as the honourable member from the University of Calcutta has said, in 1940. The honourable mover has waited

for four years. Things since then have changed. The famine has increased the number of widows and orphans. I do not say that the draft is a perfect Bill but so far as it goes it is the best that was possible. A doubt has been raised, for no rhyme or reason, as to why the Government did not sponsor the Bill. The reason, Sir, will be interesting for the House to know. It was not either this Government or its predecessor in office or even the one before that which is responsible for it. The All-India Women's Conference wrote to the honourable the mover to put through a piece of legislation of this form in the Bengal Assembly. She took it up and it will again come as a surprise to the critics that the Bill, as originally presented, was an exact copy of the Bill which was passed in the Assembly of the United Provinces and sponsored by Mrs. Uma Nehru. That being so I do not see why honourable members opposite should not accept the Bill with the many amendments that have been added to it (Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee: And some more.) Conditions today are bad. Let us go ahead and if the defects that were mentioned by the honourable member for the University do face us in the future we shall have power to amend, alter and change the law as we like.

Another point which was made by both the speakers who spoke before me referred to the Government taking up financial responsibility in the matter of these Homes and Orphanages. It was not the intention of the sponsors of the Bill, or now the Act as it is in the United Provinces, nor of the honourable mover tonight in this House to go beyond the stage of supervision. I could give instances that have come to my knowledge but it would not suit the atmosphere of the House at the moment. But I am satisfied and convinced that if we have Widows' Homes and Orphanages or other institutions which are started with good intentions and which mean to help widows and orphans, let us not wait. That such houses are being utilised for nefarious purposes, that children have to become articles of traffic that none of us want. I do not say we shall remove all the filth and dirt but the first effort on the part of the honourable mover tonight deserves encouragement and support, and I feel that the House will not be well advised if it does not go through the Bill tonight and put it on the Statute Book at as early a date as possible.

Mr. ABUL HOSSAIN AHMED: আইনের যে সমস্ত defect আছে সেগুলি Rulesএ সেরে নেওয়া যায়। এই বিলে যে সমস্ত defects ডাঃ শ্যামাপ্রসাদ মুখার্জি দেখিয়েছেন তা Rulesএ সেরে নেওয়া যেতে পারে। কোন জিনিষই এক সঙ্গে perfectionএ আসতে পারে না। Defectsগুলি Rules এর মধ্যেও সেরে নেওয়া যেতে পারে অথবা Councilএও সেরে নেওয়া যেতে পারে। Perfection is a thing we can approach but never reach.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Sir, we all welcome this Bill. At the same time we cannot pretend that we are not alive to the defects of this Bill. One serious defect, Sir, from which this Bill suffers is that it does not lay down at all the conditions under which licences will be granted or withheld. It will be after all on those conditions that the organisation and proper running of the Widows' Homes and Orphanages will depend. Sir, how are people expected to know in organising Orphanages and Widows' Homes under which conditions they are to work? It is, Sir, for the very success of this measure which is indeed a welcome

measure that it is necessary that the conditions should be laid down in the Bill and should not be left to be specified in the rules—rules framed by the Government behind the back of the Legislature. Sir, if it is intended that this measure should succeed, that the Orphanages and Widows' Homes should continue and be run on proper and unexceptionable lines, then, Sir, the conditions ought to be specified in the Bill so that every one who will undertake the management of a Widows' Home will be quite alive to the responsibilities of the management as indicated in the conditions enumerated in the Bill. I therefore agree with Dr. Mookerjee when he suggests for a short postponement of the consideration of the Bill so that amendments which may be suggested by us may be duly considered by the mover and the Government and if agreed to, the Bill may emerge from this House with improved features.

Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, so far as the suggestion thrown out by my honourable friends Dr. Mookerjee and Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri is concerned, I submit, Sir, that the Bill has been before the House for the last four years; the Bill was introduced in the year 1940, and it was referred to a Select Committee which included representatives from all sides of the House—members representing the Government party as well as the Opposition. I think, Sir, that all the parties in the House who are raising objections now were represented there and I think that they could have raised these objections at the Select Committee stage, and they could also have made suitable amendments which they are now proposing in the House today. Sir, so far as private members' Bills are concerned, everybody is aware of the difficulties with which the mover of a Bill is faced——

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir. Is it correct to say that all the parties were represented in the Select Committee?

Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL: Sir, it is the practice of this House and a convention of the legislature everywhere that whenever a Bill is referred to a Select Committee members from all sections of the House are represented therein. If there was any omission, any party in the Legislative Assembly could have raised objection that that particular party has not been represented.

So far as this Bill is concerned, I think that the Opposition did not take any notice of this Bill, it being a private member's Bill. I am told, Sir, that even the leader of the official Congress party was in the Select Committee. I think that he did not care to attend meetings of the Select Committee or he did not think that it will be of any use to bring it before the House after four years for consideration and passing. The difficulty is, supposing that we agree to the suggestion thrown out by Dr. Mookerjee there will be no opportunity available, to the mover because this is the budget session. So, it is very difficult to have another day to take up this Bill. So far as non-official days are concerned, they are divided between resolutions and Bills. Now, Sir, we have got one Bill here today. There are other Bills also no less important than this one, which are on the agenda. Every member is ever anxious to have those Bills also to be agitated in the House and passed into law, and so I do not think that at this stage Dr. Mookerjee can rise and say that the Bill be postponed. If he was at

all serious or if any party in the House was at all serious or any member was at all serious, he could have raised it in the Select Committee stage. Not only that; notice was given that this Bill will be taken into consideration and sufficient time was available to every member to put in suitable amendments to the provisions of the Bill. If they sent in amendments, those could have been taken up today. If it was not possible to finish all the amendments in one day, they could have been taken up on the next day. They did not care to send in any amendments. Sir, generally we find that the Opposition always send in amendments whether the Bills are official or non-official, but here it is singularly absent in this case. There is no amendment from the Opposition side to this Bill. We also find that the one or two amendments that have been proposed to be moved are amendments put in by members of the Government party. So, it appears that it is only the Government party who wants that a measure like this ought to be put on the statute book. Now if the Opposition choose to rise from their slumber so late, I think it is not possible to accommodate them now.

There is another point as Dr. Mookerjee has suggested, there is no provision in the Bill so far as State assistance is concerned. That raises financial considerations also. Suppose the Bill is postponed, Government have to be approached and a collection of data has to be made, e.g., what is the amount spent, the number of Homes, the number of orphans and widows, what is the amount of State assistance that will be needed and whether it should be spread over, whether it should be recurring, etc But it is not possible to collect all these data within so short a time, so that the same may be placed before the House and the House can give its verdict on it. If the Opposition is at all serious on the points raised on the floor of the House, let the Bill go in as it is with the amendments that have been put in at this stage if the House thinks that it should accept the amendments that appear in the order paper If the Opposition is anxious to have the amendments that may be proposed by Dr. Mookerjee the same can be moved in the Council at the proper stage and if the Council thinks that the amendments proposed by Dr. Mookerjee and other members of the House are appropriate and they are quite necessary they may be accepted by the Council. And I do not think that the Assembly will have any objection to accepting the amendments that have been accepted by the Council.

With these observations, I recommend the consideration of the Bill and its passing.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA : মাননীয় ডা: শ্যামাপ্রসাদ মুখার্জি যে প্রস্তাব উপস্থিত করেছেন তা এত সহজ যে এই নিয়ে গভর্ণমেণ্টের পক্ষ থেকে কোন আপত্তি উঠতে পারে এটা আমার ধারণার অতীত। ডাক্তার মুখার্জি কি চেয়েছেন—মোটের উপর তিনি চেয়েছেন যে এসেম্ব্লিতে সকলে একমত হয়ে এমন একটা বিল কাউন্সিলে পাঠাতে পারি তাহলে সেটা কাউন্সিলে অতি সহজেই পাশহয়ে যাবে, এবং এটা এসেম্ব্লির পক্ষেও গৌরবজনক হবে যে, মেম্বাররা এই বিলের সমস্ত ত্রুটিমুক্ত করে এই বিল উপস্থিত করেছেন, আর যদি ত্রুটিমুক্ত করে এই বিল পাঠাতে না পারি তাহলে সেটা এসেম্ব্লির পক্ষে গৌরবজনক হবে না। Private Bill বলে এটা 8 বৎসর পড়ে ছিল কাজেই লোকের দৃষ্টি এদিক থেকে বহুদিন সরে গিয়েছিল। তারপর এই Bill এমন সময়ে উপস্থিত করা হয়েছে যার পূর্ব্বে এসেম্ব্লি বহুদিন বন্ধ ছিল। কাজেই অনেকে এ সম্বন্ধে অনেকগুলি সংশোধন প্রস্তাব দিতে

পারে নি। সেদিক থেকে অভিযোগ হতে অবশ্য নিজেদের মুক্তি দিচ্ছি না। আমি শুধু বলতে চাই যাতে এসেম্বিলির পক্ষ থেকে একটা ত্রুটিযুক্ত বিল না যায়। আমরা এটাকে ত্রুটিমুক্ত করে সর্বাঙ্গসুন্দর করে কাউন্সিলে পাঠাতে চাই। তাহলে এটা এসেম্বিলির পক্ষে গৌরবজনক হবে।

ইসরাইল সাহেব একটা কথা তুলেছেন যে এটা Budget session হয়ত সময় পাওয়া যাবে না। কিন্তু এবার Budget শেষ হলেই এসেম্বিলি শেষ হবে না। গভর্ণমেণ্টের অনেকগুলি বিল পাশ করতে হবে। কাজেই আমি জানি এই sessionএ পর্য্যাপ্ত সময় পাব। আর একটা বিষয়ে ডা: শ্যামাপ্রসাদ দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করেছেন সেটা হচ্ছে licenceএর ব্যাপার। আমার অভিজ্ঞতা থেকে বলছি বিনা licence এইরূপ Institution চালাতে বেগ পেতে হয়। তারপর যদি licence দিয়ে অপমানের বোঝা ঘাড়ে চাপে তাহলে এই সমস্ত Institution চালাবার জন্য কারও বিন্দুমাত্র উৎসাহ থাকবে না। তাহলে বহু সংখ্যক পরিত্যক্ত শিশু এবং নারীদের কি অবস্থা হবে সে সম্বন্ধে গভর্ণমেণ্টের সচেতন হওয়া উচিত। অবশ্য ভাল কাজের ভিতর দিয়াও যে খারাপ কাজ হয় না তা নয়। বহু লোক ভাল কাজের আড়ালে অনেক দুষ্কার্য্য করে। কিন্তু সেই জন্য যদি যাঁরা সভ্যভাবে এবং ধর্ম্মের ভিতর দিয়া জীবনযাপন করছেন তাদের উপর বিধি-নিষেধ আরোপ করা হয় তাহলে যাঁরা এই সব প্রতিষ্ঠান পরিচালনা করছেন শুধু তাদের উপর অত্যাচার করা হবে তা নয়, সমস্ত সমাজের উপর অত্যাচার করা হবে। যদি যাঁরা মহৎ আদর্শের প্রেরণায় এই সমস্ত প্রতিষ্ঠান পরিচালনা করছেন, তাঁদের উৎসাহ দেওয়া হয় সঙ্গে সঙ্গে যারা ভাল কাজের নাম নিয়ে মন্দ কাজ করছেন তাঁদের শাসনের ব্যবস্থা থাকে এইরূপ একটি বিল আমরা প্রণয়ন করতে পারি তাহলে সেটা আমাদের পক্ষে গৌরবজনক হবে এবং যিনি এই Bill এখানে উপস্থিত করেছেন তাঁর নাম চিরস্মরণীয় হবে এবং এসেম্বিলির মর্য্যাদা বৃদ্ধি হবে।

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I would have liked that I and my Party, the Party that I have the honour to represent, would not be called upon to express an opinion at this stage, but, Sir, many of our friends have already expressed themselves from this side of the House on this legislation in a manner which has raised certain issues on which it is necessary that we should make the position clear. So far as the principles underlying this legislation go, our Party extend their whole-hearted support to those principles. In fact, I have had various representations from certain institutions and persons responsible for running certain institutions who had in the past suggested certain improvements on the old Bill and I am glad to note that some of these suggestions have been incorporated in the Select Committee stage. Our esteemed friend, Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee, points out some other defects in certain detail. We would very much like to know the Government's viewpoint with regard to those defects that have been pointed out by Dr. Mookerjee and while submitting to the Government the necessity of clarifying some of these points we also feel that this Bill should not be delayed much beyond this present session of the legislature at the latest. If it is possible to take up this measure by the consent of all sections of the House on the next non-official business day as the first item and if that period that is thus made available is applied to examine some of the suggestions made by friends who genuinely want to improve the conditions of this legislation, we for our part would welcome that opportunity. In any case we feel that this measure, the like of which was sponsored by the Congress Ministry in the United Provinces and passed and a measure which also has been suggested by the All-India Women's Conference, should

have our whole-hearted sympathy and we would not stand in the way of this legislation being enacted but we would most respectfully request the Hon'ble Chief Minister who is also the Home Minister to clarify their position with regard to the difficulties drawn attention to. In fact, Sir, as our bonafides with regard to our intention to get this legislation passed this session we have demonstrated that in spite of the fact that there were certain technical difficulties in the way of this Bill being taken up today we did not like to raise those difficulties and we wanted the Begum Saheba to have the credit for this legislation for social reform.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Sir, I am really surprised that there appears to be so much opposition to this seemingly (Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Seemingly or really!) innocent Bill. If hon'ble members turn to the report of the Select Committee, it will be seen that there was not a single dissentient note. (Mr. KIRAN SANKAR ROY: I was not present.) Mr. Upendra Nath Edbar is a signatory; Mr. J. N. Gupta is a signatory; Mrs. Murshed, Khan Bahadur Mohammed Ali, Mr. Abdulla-al Mahmood, Mr. Hashem Ali Khan, Mrs. Nellie Sen Gupta and Miss P. Bell-Hart are all signatories to the report. There is not a single dissentient note. From that it appears to me that this is a most non-controversial measure and that it could be passed in the course of a very short space of time. However, let us assume that the objections that have been raised are well intentioned. The intention is said to be to make certain improvements in the Bill. It has already been stated by Mr. Siddiqi that a similar Bill was passed in the United Provinces legislature a long time ago. We do not know of any difficulties having arisen in the working of that measure. I think in the first instance no legislative measure can be without any defect whatsoever. There may be certain defects. Some of them may be rectified in the other place, and again if in the course of working of the measure it is found that certain other amendments are necessary such amendments can be made later. In every new measure, that is the usual procedure. If we postpone the Bill today, I think there is hardly any chance of the Bill being passed into law in this session because it has to go through both the Houses. Dr. Mookerjee has raised several points: one is regarding financial assistance: His objection is that there is nothing in the measure about financial assistance by Government to Orphanages and Widows' Homes. I think it is not necessary to provide that in a Bill. Government has been giving financial assistance to educational institutions, but there is no law which provides that Government should give such assistance and give assistance to this or that extent; still Government has been giving assistance. As regards Orphanages also Government has been giving assistance to some of them, and I may tell the House that on account of the crisis through which we have just passed it has been necessary for Government to think of establishing permanent Orphanages. There are temporary Orphanages in which destitute children are being taken care of, but the present plan of the Government is that in every district there will be an Orphanage, if not more, and orphan children will be taken care of therein. A large amount of money will have to be spent for that. Over and above that, Government will, within their capacity, help deserving private institutions financially. Therefore, Sir, I do think that on this score the Bill should not be postponed at all.

Another point that was raised by Dr. Mookerjee is this: there is no provision in the Bill for taking care of the inmates of a particular Home or Orphanage the licence of which may be cancelled or suspended by Government. That follows as a matter of course: before Government cancels a licence Government will take care to see what will become of the inmates of the Orphanage or the Widows' Home concerned. That goes without saying. And I can give this assurance on behalf of Government that no licence will be cancelled without provision having been made for the inmates of the Orphanages and the Widows' Homes concerned. I, therefore, think that the measure should be gone through without any further delay.

The motion of Begum Farhut Bano Khanam that the Bengal Supervision of Orphanage and Widows' Home Bill, 1940, as reported by the Select Committee be taken into consideration, was then put and agreed to.

Clause 1.

The question that clause 1 stand part of the Bill was then put and agreed to.

Clause 2.

Maulana MD. ABDUL AZIZ: Sir, I beg to move that in cluase 2(3), line 2, for the word "parents", the word "father" be substituted.

Begum FARHUT BANO KHANAM: Sir, I accept the amendment.

The motion that in clause 2(3), line 2, for the word "parents" the word "father" be substituted was then put and agreed to.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: What about the word "parents" occurring for a second time in line 3 of this sub-clause, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is purely consequential.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: It appears from the amendment that has been moved by the Maulana Sahib that the amendment is in relation to the word "parents" occurring in line 2: what about the word "parents" occurring in the next line?

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the change can be easily done under rule 65 of the Assembly Procedure Rules.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: With your leave, Sir, I want to move a short-notice amendment for this purpose.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Sir, I beg to move that for the word "parents" occurring in line 3, sub-clause (3), the word "father" be substituted.

Sir, it is a mere consequential amendment.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Sir, this second amendment is not necessary because here an orphan means a boy or girl under eighteen years of age who has lost his or her father or has been abandoned by his or her parents or guardians.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think there is no necessity of changing the word "parents" occurring for the second time in this sub-clause.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Sir, I beg leave to withdraw my short-notice amendment in that case.

The short-notice amendment of Mr. Fazlur Rahman was, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

The question that clause 2, as amended, stand part of the Bill was then put and agreed to.

New clause 2A.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Sir, I beg to move that after clause 2 the following new clause be inserted, namely:—

"2A. Nothing in this Act shall apply to—

(*a*) a reformatory school, an industrial school or an auxiliary home established or certified by the Provincial Government under the Bengal Children Act, 1922;

(*b*) any institution recognised as a place of suitable custody under sub-section (*1*) of section 28 of the Bengal Children Act, 1922, or under any rule made under clause (*b*) of sub-section (*2*) of section 27 of the Bengal Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act, 1933; or

(*c*) any orphanage or widows' home established and maintained by the Provincial Government."

Sir, the amendment is self-explanatory. Those institutions that are already recognised statutorily by Government should not require the taking of licences as provided in this measure. That is why this amendment has been proposed.

The motion was then put and agreed to.

Clause 3.

Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRY: Sir, I beg to move that after the proviso to clause 3 the following new proviso be added, namely:—

"Provided further that no licence shall be necessary in respect of any Home or Orphanage that may be opened for meeting any temporary emergency."

Sir, the Bill provides for registration and licence. No home can be started without being previously registered and without having secured a licence from the district authorities though it makes provision for the existing institutions to secure licence within six months' time. It may be that in future we may have to face a situation in which we may have to start temporary homes. Sir, during the Midnapore tragedy and during the existing situation we had to start a number of temporary homes. In future also we may have to start such temporary homes, but if the Bill is passed into law, it will be impossible for any to start temporary homes because these will have to be first registered, then licensed and then the homes can be started. So, I am simply asking for an exception in cases where temporary emergency arises necessitating the opening of such temporary homes.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Sir, I stand to support the motion that has been moved by my friend Mr. Ashutosh Lahiry. Those who have worked in the matter of relief work have found the necessity of temporary homes or orphanages and, as a matter of fact, in the distressed areas many temporary homes in the emergency have been started and they are really

doing very good work. The non-official organisations have been doing very good work. Government want to start some permanent homes, but the necessity of such temporary homes in this emergency is very great. So far as these temporary homes are concerned, if a licence is necessary and Government impose certain conditions, there may be delay in starting such homes. This is relief work and any delay cannot be brooked. (MR. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: But you have not defined what is "temporary".) Temporary emergency intended by my friend means emergency that necessitates starting of relief work, and as it is relief work, no delay can be brooked and if the licence has to be obtained, there will be some delay and delay means death to a large number of destitute children. In view of these facts, I appeal to the Government side to accept this amendment. For the purpose of relief work, this is a very suitable amendment and in view of the present situation I hope the mover and the Chairman of the Committee will accept this amendment.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the language of the amendment is peculiarly dangerous for the whole object of the Bill. The temporariness of an emergency is very difficult to assess in language the construction of which is liable to be misunderstood and misused. We should not be particularly anxious to make this amendment. For instance, the honourable mover of the amendment will realise that the war is an emergency and it is temporary. We cannot always be in a state of war, but the war has wrought havoc with the womanhood of the city. I am anxious that the amendment should be that even if the temporary character of the emergency is three days, there should be a licence because these temporary emergencies are likely to be utilised by rascals in our society for purposes which this Bill is trying to check for with these two words in the hands of not very clever Magistrates or Judges, these may be taken into channels which we cannot dream of. My appeal to the honourable member will be, if he really intends to do w[illegible] by this Bill, to withdraw his amendment; if he does not, it will be voted upon.

Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: Sir, the matter included in this amendment makes it abundantly clear as to why the Bill should not be rushed through for the very interest and object of the Bill. Mr. Siddiqi complains about the language. Obviously improvement can be made in the language, but that improvement cannot be made if we go on discussing the amendment in the way in which we are. The point of substance is, does the House want that there should be such temporary homes for meeting temporary emergencies. Now, whether the war is an emergency or not is a matter which we need not discuss in detail, but even supposing as a result of the war Calcutta is bombed or any other place is affected and it is necessary to open some temporary homes for giving protection to orphans and women, it may be then said to have been necessitated by the war itself. But the principal point is that there may be occasions when there should be temporary homes and the Bill, as drafted, precludes anyone from opening such a temporary home until all the conditions are fulfilled, viz., you will have to apply for registration, it will have to be registered in accordance with the Registration of Societies Act. That itself will take some weeks. Then the matter will have to be enquired into which means that the home

may not be opened for a couple of months. Is that the object of the mover of the Bill? Certainly not. The mover certainly does not want that this class of homes whose aim is to serve humanity should be frustrated by reason of the provisions of the Bill. I do not know what the mover desires or what Government propose to do, but the language may be modified in a suitable manner. There is no doubt that the spirit of this amendment is one which should be accepted by all sections of the House.

Mr. ABUL HOSSAIN AHMED: আমি পুলিশ অফিস রূপ এইরকম তিনটি Homeএ গিয়েছিলাম প্রত্যেক যায়গায় দেখলাম rascalityর কার্য্য। Emergency measureএও যে rascality কার্য্যকলাপ চলবে না আমি বিশ্বাস করিনা।

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: অত্যন্ত আশ্চর্য্যের বিষয় বর্ত্তমান সঙ্কট কালে মানুষের বুদ্ধি এত ভোঁতা হয়ে যাবে এবং এই সামান্য বিষয় বুঝতে কষ্ট হবে। আজ যখন চারিদিকে হাহাকার দেখা যাচ্ছে মেয়েলোকের দল রাস্তায় রাস্তায় ঘুরে বেড়াচ্ছে তখন যদি পাঁচজন সহৃদয় ব্যক্তি গ্রামে বা শহরে এই সমস্ত বিপন্ন লোকদের আশ্রয় দেন তাহলে সদাশয় বৃটিশ গভর্ণমেণ্টের অনুগ্রহের মন্ত্রিমণ্ডলীর গভর্ণমেণ্ট কৈফিয়ৎ চাইবেন কেন তাদের আশ্রয় দিয়েছ। তাদের যুক্তি হল দুষ্ট লোক সুবিধা পেয়ে দুষ্টামি করতে পারে। আমি আগেই বলেছি দুষ্ট লোক সুবিধা পেলে দুষ্টামি করতে পারে না পৃথিবীতে এমন যায়গা নেই। তাই বলে কি দুষ্ট লোকের ভয়ে কেহ সাধু কার্য্য করতে অগ্রসর হবেনা? কে সমাজের উপকার করবেন, কে সমাজের অপকার করবেন সে সম্বন্ধে তাঁদের বিন্দুমাত্র ভাববার অবসর নাই। যাঁদের এই সমস্ত বিষয়ে ধারণা আছে তাঁরা বিরোধিতা করতে পারবেন না। যাঁরা বিরোধিতা করছেন তাঁরা সুবুদ্ধির পরিচয় দিচ্ছেন না। তাঁদের যদি কোন সুবুদ্ধি থাকে তার পরিচয় দিন।

The motion of Mr. Ashutosh Lahiri that after the proviso to clause 3 the following new proviso be added, namely:—

"Provided further that no licence shall be necessary in respect of any Home or Orphanage that may be opened for meeting any temporary emergency",

was then put and lost.

The question that clause 3 stand part of the Bill was then put and agreed to.

Clause 4.

The question that clause 4 stand part of the Bill was then put and agreed to.

Clause 5.

Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: Sir, I beg to move that the following provisos be added to clause 5, namely:—

"Provided that such suspension or cancellation shall be subject to confirmation by the Commissioner of the Division in which the Home is situated;

Provided further that at least three months' notice shall be given to the authorities of the Institution for such suspension or cancellation of licence."

Sir, in clause 5 it has been provided that a licence granted may be cancelled if there is any contravention of any of the provisions of this Act or if the institution in respect of which the licence was granted has ceased to fulfil the conditions specified in clauses (*a*) to (*c*) of sub-section (*2*) of

section 4, namely, that members of the society are to be respectable members of the town or district, the said institution is to be located in a healthy locality and that the accommodation is to be sufficient for the purpose. The District Magistrate or the Commissioner of Police can cancel a licence if he holds that certain members of the society are not respectable or that the said institution is not located in any healthy locality or that the inmates have insufficient accommodation. On these grounds, the District Magistrate or the Commissioner of Police can cancel a licence, but there is no provision as to what is to be done if the inmates have to leave the orphanage or home. Supposing under the orders of the District Magistrate a licence is cancelled, where will these inmates go? There is no provision for this in this Bill. To safeguard against this, I have suggested certain restrictions on the authority of the District Magistrate as regards cancelling a licence. In the first place the District Magistrate's decision must be confirmed by the Commissioner of the Division. We often find that executive authorities in this country are guided by whims, caprices, personal inclinations and prejudices. In order to eliminate that it is essential that this cancellation or suspension of licence should be confirmed by the Commissioner of the Division.

Again, Sir, I have asked that three months' notice should be given to the authorities of the institution for such suspension or cancellation, because you cannot throw away the inmates—women and orphans—on the streets. The authorities must be given sufficient time for either sending them away to other places or making arrangements with other institutions where accommodation may be found for them. That requires some time. The Bill makes no provision for that. I think it is essential that some notice should be given to the authorities before cancellation. Otherwise, these inmates will be rendered homeless. I hope, Sir, that this amendment will be accepted.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Sir, I think that this amendment is not necessary. The first clause of this amendment is that cancellation should be confirmed by the Commissioner of the Division. That is not at all necessary, because the authority entitled to cancel a licence under this measure will be the District Magistrate. We can assume, Sir, that the District Magistrate will never cancel a licence without good reasons for cancelling it. Therefore, the amendment is not at all necessary. On the other hand, Sir, there is a danger. This will give a licence to abuses to prevent which cancellation may be necessary.

The second portion of the amendment is also, I think, unacceptable because it provides that three months' notice should be given for suspension or cancellation of a licence. If abuses go on in a particular institution then it may be necessary to suspend the licence all at once. If three months' notice has to be given then abuses will go on and the very object of cancellation of a licence will be frustrated. (Dr. SYAMAPRASAD MOOKERJEE: What will happen to the inmates?) I have already said that before suspending or cancelling a licence Government will have to take good care of what will happen to the inmates. There is, of course, no such provision in the Bill but it is only commonsense to assume that Government will have to take the responsibility of making proper provision for such inmates.

The motion of Mr. Ashutosh Lahiri that the following provisos be added to clause 5, namely:—

"Provided that such suspension or cancellation shall be subject to confirmation by the Commissioner of the Division in which the Home is situated;

Provided further that at least three months' notice shall be given to the authorities of the Institution for such suspension or cancellation of licence",

was then put and lost.

The question that clause 5 stand part of the Bill was then put and agreed to.

Clause 6.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Sir, I beg to move that in clause 6, in lines 2-4, for the words beginning with "when authorised in writing" and ending with "any person not in the service of the Crown or any Magistrate", the following be substituted, namely:—

"any Deputy Commissioner of Police authorised in writing in this behalf by the Commissioner of Police or any Magistrate authorised in writing in this behalf by the District Magistrate or any person not in the service of the Crown when authorised in writing in this behalf in Calcutta by the Commissioner of Police or elsewhere by the District Magistrate".

Sir, in the Bill as reported by the Select Committee the provision is that in Calcutta the Commissioner of Police can only authorise a Magistrate to make an investigation. That was, I think, through a misapprehension, because in Calcutta the Magistrates have got no executive powers. Therefore, it is necessary that so far as Calcutta is concerned, the Commissioner of Police should be authorised to give power to the Deputy Commissioners of Police to make the enquiry. That is the whole object of this amendment.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Sir, I oppose this amendment. I cannot understand, when the Government is taking over supervision of an institution under this Bill, why should any person be authorised by the District Magistrate or the Commissioner of Police to inspect it at all. Inspection should be the responsibility of the Government and only the officials should be entrusted with inspection and not any and every person even if he be authorised by the District Magistrate or the Commissioner of Police.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tamizuddin Khan that in clause 6, in lines 2-4, for the words beginning with "when authorised in writing" and ending with "any person not in the service of the Crown or any Magistrate", the following be substituted, namely:—

"Any Deputy Commissioner of Police authorised in writing in this behalf by the Commissioner of Police or any Magistrate authorised in writing in this behalf by the District Magistrate or any person not in the service of the Crown when authorised in writing in this behalf in Calcutta by the Commissioner of Police or elsewhere by the District Magistrate",

was then put and agreed to.

The question that clause 6, as amended, stand part of the Bill was then put and agreed to.

Clause 8.

Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: Sir, I beg to move that clause 8(*2*) be omitted.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Sir, in supporting the motion, I beg to point out that in this case the proof of the guilt has not to be proved by the prosecution but the innocence has to be proved by the accused. It is a well-known principle in criminal law that a person is presumed to be innocent unless proved to be guilty.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: On a point of order, Sir. On which motion is Mr. Dhirendra Nath Datta speaking? Amendments Nos. 9 and 10 have not been moved.

Mr. SPEAKER: Amendments Nos. 9 and 10 have not been moved. Amendment No. 11 has been moved and he is speaking on that.

Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: I wish to speak on that.

Mr. SPEAKER: You may do so now.

Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: Clause 8(*2*) reads thus:—

> "If the person contravening any of the provisions of this Act is a society, every member thereof shall, unless he proves that the contravention took place without his knowldge or that he exercised all due diligence to prevent such contravention, be deemed to be guilty of such contravention".

This is a very extraordinary provision in a Bill of this kind. At present, with the management of these Homes and Orphanages are associated many influential persons who have neither the time nor the leisure to take any detailed interest in the working of such organisations. It is the Secretary or the Manager who looks after the detailed work of such an organisation or institution. Now, the Bill makes it incumbent on every member of the Managing Committee to take a detailed interest; for his failure to do so, he may be liable to be fined to the extent of Rs. 500 for any breach that may have been committed by the Secretary or the Manager of an Asram or Home. That is a very extraordinary provision. It would discourage any prominent man to join a Managing Committee of any Home or Orphanage. Therefore I think that clause 8(*2*) should be omitted; othewise influential persons will not be induced to join the managing committees of Homes or Orphanages.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: এই সংশোধনী প্রস্তাব অত্যন্ত প্রয়োজনীয়। যদি গভর্ণমেণ্ট চান যে এই সমস্ত Institutionগুলি বিশিষ্ট লোকের দ্বারা পরিচালিত হউক তাহলে দেখা উচিত যে এমন কোন ধারা বিলে সংশ্লিষ্ট না হয় যাতে এই সব বিশিষ্ট লোক কোন Homeএর সহিত সংশ্লিষ্ট থাকার দরুণ কোন অসুবিধায় পড়েন। তাঁদের কর্ত্তব্য কেবল হবে সাধারণভাবে দেখা কি প্রণালীতে এই সমস্ত Home পরিচালিত হবে। যদি কোন Homeএর বিরুদ্ধে অভিযোগ আসে তখন মাত্র অনুসন্ধান করবেন। এ ছাড়া প্রতিদিন যে সমস্ত কার্য্য Homeএ হয় তা নিয়ে মাথা ঘামাবার অবসর তাদের নেই। যদি এটা বাধ্যতামূলক হয় তাহলে বহু লোক এর সভ্য হবেন।

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Sir, Government is prepared to accept the amendment.

Begum FARHUT BANO KHANAM: Sir, I accept the amendment.

The motion of Mr. Ashutosh Lahiri that clause 8(2) be omitted was put and agreed to.

The question that clause 8, as amended, stand part of the Bill, was then put and agreed to.

Clauses 9, 10 and 11.

The question that clauses 9, 10 and 11 stand part of the Bill was put and agreed to.

Preamble.

The question that the Preamble stand part of the Bill was then put and agreed to.

Begum FARHUT BANO KHANAM: Sir, I beg to move that the Bengal Orphanages and Widows' Homes Bill, 1944, as settled in the Assembly, be passed.

The motion was then put and agreed to.

The Bengal Wakf (Amendment) Bill, 1940.

Dr. SANAULLAH: Sir, I beg to move that the Bengal Wakf (Amendment) Bill, 1940, be continued under the proviso to rule 19(2) of the Bengal Legislative Assembly Procedure Rules.

The motion was then put and agreed to.

Dr. SANAULLAH: Sir, I beg also to move that the Bengal Wakf (Amendment) Bill, 1940, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of—and here, Sir, I shall read out the names of those honourable members who have signified their assent to serve on the Select Committee—

(1) the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Education Department,
(2) Maulana Md. Ibrahim,
(3) Maulana Abdur Razzaq,
(4) Haji Tofel Ahmad Chowdhury,
(5) Maulvi Md. Israil,
(6) Maulvi Ahmad Hossain,
(7) Khan Bahadur Haji Badi Ahmad Choudhury, and
(8) Dr. Sanaullah (the mover),

with instructions to submit their report by October 1, 1944, the number of members forming the quorum being five.

The Bill was already circulated for eliciting public opinion and the Bill received practically unanimous support from all parties and also wakf institutions and persons. So I do not think that it should be recirculated for eliciting public opinion.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Sir, I beg to move by way of amendment that the Bill be recirculated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 30th June, 1944.

Sir, the position of Government is this: we feel that the Bengal Wakf Act requires amendment and Government is contemplating a comprehensive amendment of the measure. I may tell the House that Government has appointed a small committee to go into the administration of the Bengal Wakf Act and to suggest necessary amendments. Unfortunately one of the members of the committee, Mr. Abul Quasem, died a short while ago and that is principally why the committee has not yet been able to submit its report. As soon as the report of the committee is received, Government will examine the report and introduce a measure as early as possible. I expected some time ago that the measure would be introduced in this session of the Legislature, but unfortunately on account of what has happened the committee has not yet been able to finish its work and I am somewhat doubtful now whether the amending measure can be introduced in this session. I can assure the honourable member that when Government considers the amendments to be made, the amendments suggested by Dr. Sanaullah in this Bill will be carefully considered. In this view I hope the honourable the mover of the Bill will be pleased to withdraw his motion and accept the recirculation motion that I have moved.

Dr. SANAULLAH: Sir, I accept the amendment.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tamizuddin Khan that the Bengal Wakf (Amendment) Bill, 1940, be recirculated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 30th June, 1944, was then put and agreed to.

(At this stage the House was adjourned for 15 minutes.)

(After Adjournment.)

The Legal Practitioners (Amendment) Bill, 1939.

Mr. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ: Sir, I beg leave to move that the Legal Practitioners (Amendment) Bill, 1939, be continued under the proviso to rule 19(2) of the Bengal Legislative Assembly Procedure Rules.

I think as the motion stands I need not say anything further on this point.

The motion was then put and agreed to.

The Bengal Housing Bill, 1943.

Mr. J. N. GUPTA: Sir, I beg to move that the Bengal Housing Bill, 1943, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of—

(1) The Hon'ble Minister in charge of Commerce, Labour and Industries Department,
(2) Mr. Upendra Nath Barman,
(3) Mr. Syed Badrudduja,
(4) Mr. Aftab Ali,
(5) Rai Sahib Anukul Chandra Das,
(6) Mr. C. Griffiths,
(7) Mr. B. Mukherjee,
(8) Mr. Atul Chandra Sen,
(9) Rai Bahadur Jogesh Chandra Sen,
(10) Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal,

(11) Mr. I. J. Kennedy, and
(12) Mr. J. N. Gupta (the mover),

with instructions to submit their report by June 30, 1944, the number of members forming the quorum being five.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Gupta, have you got consent of Mr. B. Mukherjee?

Mr. J. N. GUPTA: I have not got it.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: But you have proposed his name without taking his consent. You eliminate that name.

Mr. J. N. GUPTA: All right, Sir.

Sir, this Bill is introduced to stamp out the causes that are causing havocs to the workers for not having healthy houses and the environment they are forced to live in. Families after families are being extinct year after year due to the negligence of the landlords and employers. The Government statistics for 1940 show that more than 85,203 men died from diseases of respiratory organs besides tuberculosis which developed owing to these men residing in unhealthy houses. 1940 record shews that the rate of mortality being 1·71 per mile in Calcutta usual returned the highest death rate—8·59. Jalpaiguri comes next—5·15, followed by Howrah—3·33, and Hooghly—3·25. Pneumonia—44,967. It is responsible for 56·2 per cent. of the total mortality from respiratory diseases.

Legislation is necessary when protection is denied in ordinary course and when no possible remedy is forthcoming from the society. That situation has arisen. To protect the workers as well as the middle class people who live in rented houses and who are denied the humanitarian treatment from the house-owners this measure is suggested

It may also be pointed out to the employers of large number of workers that the proposed measure will largely benefit them. This will not only be able to reduce the sickness amongst the workers but would help the industrial concerns to increase their outturn

I hope the members will support this legislation and help the workers to be in a healthy atmosphere.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: One more point, Mr. Gupta. You have proposed the name of Mr. Kennedy and have you taken his consent? Do you propose his name in place of Mr. Mukherjee?

Mr. J. N. GUPTA: I have proposed the name of Mr. Mukherjee but his consent could not be obtained as he did not come. Then in place of Mr. Stark I have proposed the name of Mr. I. J. Kennedy and he has agreed. I hope this amendment will be accepted.

The motion of Mr. J. N. Gupta that the Bengal Housing Bill, 1943, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of—

(1) The Hon'ble Minister in charge of Commerce, Labour and Industries Department,
(2) Mr. Upendra Nath Barman,
(3) Mr. Syed Badrudduja,
(4) Mr. Aftab Ali,

(5) Rai Sahib Anukul Chandra Das,
(6) Mr. C. Griffiths,
(7) Mr. Atul Chandra Sen,
(8) Rai Bahadur Jogesh Chandra Sen,
(9) Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal, and
(10) Mr. J. N. Gupta (the mover),

with instructions to submit their report by June 30, 1944, the number of members forming the quorum being five, was then put and agreed to.

The Bengal Adult Education Bill, 1940.

Mr. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ: Sir, I beg leave to move that the Bengal Adult Education Bill, 1940, be continued under the proviso to rule 19(2) of the Bengal Legislative Assembly Procedure Rules.

The motion was then put and agreed to.

The Bengal Medical (Amendment) Bill, 1940.

Dr. SANAULLAH: Sir, I beg to move that the Bengal Medical (Amendment) Bill, 1940, be continued under the proviso to rule 19(2) of the Bengal Legislative Assembly Procedure Rules.

The motion was then put and agreed to.

The Bengal Agricultural Debtors (Amendment) Bill, 1940.

Mr. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ: Sir, I beg leave to move that the Bengal Agricultural Debtors (Amendment) Bill, 1940, be continued under the proviso to rule 19(2) of the Bengal Legislative Assembly Procedure Rules.

The motion was then put and agreed to.

The Bengal Tenancy (4th Amendment) Bill, 1940.

Mr. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ: Sir, I beg leave to move that the Bengal Tenancy (4th Amendment) Bill, 1940, be continued under the proviso to rule 19(2) of the Bengal Legislative Assembly Procedure Rules.

The motion was then put and agreed to.

The Advocates' Robes Bill, 1943.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mr. Nishitha Nath Kundu has suddenly fallen ill. Would you please permit me to move this?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I understand that Mr. Speaker has not given permission in a similar case today. I have also not got any letter from Mr. Kundu. So, I do not know whether I can give you permission to move this motion.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: May I ask that this may be passed over.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: All right, it is passed over.

The Bengal Steamer Khalasis Bill, 1943.

Dr. SANAULLAH: Sir, I beg to move that the Bengal Steamer Khalasis Bill, 1943, be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 1st December, 1944.

Khan Bahadur Haji BADI AHMED CHOWDHURY: Sir, I beg to move that the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 31st July, 1944.

Dr. SANAULLAH: I accept the amendment.

The motion of Khan Bahadur Haji Badi Ahmed Chowdhury that the Bengal Steamer Khalasis Bill, 1943, be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 31st July, 1944, was then put and agreed to.

The Bengal Money-lenders (Amendment) Bill, 1943.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: Sir, I beg to move that the Bengal Money-lenders (Amendment) Bill, 1943, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of—

(1) the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Judicial Department,
(2) Maulvi Muhammad Israil,
(3) Mr. Ahmed Hossain,
(4) Khan Bahadur Jasimuddin Ahmed,
(5) Maulvi M. Moslem Ali Molla,
(6) Babu Dhirendra Nath Datta,
(7) Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal,
(8) Mr. Shahedali,
(9) Mr. I. G. Kennedy,
(10) Maulvi Abdul Latif Biswas,
(11) Kazi Abul Masud,
(12) Khan Bahadur Alfazuddin Ahmed,
(13) Maulvi Md. Mozammel Huq,
(14) Maulvi Ahmed Ali Mridha,
(15) Mr. Hem Chandra Nasker,
(16) Mr. Abul Hossain Ahmed, and
(17) Khan Bahadur Abdul Wahab Khan (the mover),

with instructions to submit their report by the end of August, 1944, the number of members forming the quorum being five.

Mr. A. F. STARK: Sir, this Money-lenders (Amendment) Bill which has been sprung upon us contains some provisions which appear to have retrospective effect and to extend the retrospective effect provisions in the Money-lenders Act. Well, Sir, this party opposed the retrospective effect provisions of the Money-lenders Act and we feel it necessary to reserve our position with regard to this Bill. We do not propose to oppose the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee, but we would like to make it clear that there are provisions in the Bill which we think are very objectionable and will have to be altered in the Select Committee. We refer particularly to the retrospective effect provisions in the Bill.

The motion of Khan Bahadur Abdul Wahab Khan that the Bengal Money-lenders (Amendment) Bill, 1943, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of—

(1) the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Judicial Department,
(2) Maulvi Muhammad Israil,
(3) Mr. Ahmed Hossain,
(4) Khan Bahadur Jasimuddin Ahmed,
(5) Maulvi M. Moslem Ali Molla,
(6) Babu Dhirendra Nath Datta,
(7) Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal,
(8) Mr. Shahedali,
(9) Mr. I. G. Kennedy,
(10) Maulvi Abdul Latif Biswas,
(11) Kazi Abul Masud,
(12) Khan Bahadur Alfazuddin Ahmed,
(13) Maulvi Md. Mozammel Huq,
(14) Maulvi Ahmed Ali Mridha,
(15) Mr. Hem Chandra Nasker,
(16) Mr. Abul Hossain Ahmed, and
(17) Khan Bahadur Abdul Wahab Khan (the mover),

with instructions to submit their report by the end of August, 1944, the number of members forming the quorum being five was then put and agreed to.

The Bengal Village Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1939.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMED: Sir, I beg to present an *ad interim* report of the Select Committee on the Bengal Village Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1939.

Sir, I also beg to move that the time for submission of the final report of the Select Committee be extended till the end of March, 1944.

We, the members of the Select Committee to which the Bengal Village Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1939, sponsored by Maulvi Muhammad Israil, M.L.A., was referred by a motion carried in the Bengal Legislative Assembly on the 26th July, 1940, were enjoined by the said motion to present our report to the Assembly by the 31st December, 1940. The date for submission of the final report was extended by the Hon'ble Speaker during recess till the 31st October, 1943, and again it was further extended by the Hon'ble Speaker during recess till the 31st December, 1943, or till the commencement of a session of the Assembly, whichever was earlier.

We have, however, not been able to meet since then for unavoidable reason and recommend by this our further *ad interim* report that the time for submission of the final report may be further extended till the end of March, 1944.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Sir, motions Nos. III, IV, V, VI, VII and VIIIA are controversial motions. A point of order had been raised by Dr. Sanyal whether this particular motion which is under discussion is in order and whether this Bill is still alive, and it was practically agreed that this motion would not be taken up.

Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: On a point of privilege, Sir. A very serious objection has been raised with regard to the admissibility of this motion. So far as this motion is concerned, the Committee never met and the Bill lapsed and yet it is considered necessary that an *ad interim* report motion should be brought forward before the House to rectify some of the irregularities performed. This motion is altogether irregular and cannot be taken up, because under the rules the Bill has lapsed beyond revival. It cannot be revived at all.

Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL: Sir, the Opposition did not rise on a point of order earlier. If any point of order was to be raised, they ought to have raised that before the Bill is put to the House. Now the Hon'ble Minister has moved his motion. They could have raised objection at the opportune moment if they had any objection at all to raise. That stage has passed. You have put this Bill for the consent of the House. Now the Opposition cannot raise any point of order whatsoever. This is one point.

So far as the other point is concerned, my friend Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri has said that the Committee never met. Sir, the Committee met more than once. The Committee met under the Chairmanship of the then Hon'ble Mr. Basu. (Rai HARISDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: Without transacting any business.) Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri does not know, because he was not a member of the Select Committee. The Committee not only met once but twice or thrice. So far as the remark of my friend Rai Chaudhuri is concerned it is absolutely a falsehood. The date for submission of the final report was extended by the Speaker during recess till the 31st December, 1943, or till the commencement of the Session. There is absolutely no irregularity under the rules and the Bill has not lapsed. Dr. Sanyal did not care to attend the meetings of the Select Committee.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I submit, Sir, that these matters have already been formally drawn attention to by myself as well as by Rai Harendra Nath Chaudhuri and we have addressed the Speaker on these questions. It was done earlier in the course of today just after the Supervision of Orphanage and Widows' Home Bill was taken up and when other items were going to be taken. You will remember, Sir, that we got up and said that there are certain technical difficulties and we requested that these motions may be held over and the Bengal Supervision of Orphanage and Widows' Home Bill may be proceeded with for consideration and other stages. The Speaker had, as a matter of fact, agreed to have this point of order postponed and he was examining all these questions. It was at his suggestion that this matter was held over and we proceeded to the next set of items. I am really very surprised that in the absence of the Speaker you should be taken by surprise in this way. I submit that it is not merely one of these Bills, but many of these Bills which have got difficulties. Many of these Bills have lapsed and lapsed beyond revival and even the provision of section 73 of the Government of India Act cannot protect these Bills which have already gone out of our purview. It is not possible at this stage to take the House and yourself into the details of those points of order and I think it is not fair to the Speaker to expect any ruling from you in his absence on a matter which he was examining.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I was really taken by surprise. Out of deference to the wishes of the Hon'ble Minister I allowed this motion to be moved and it has been moved. I have also sent a message to the Speaker, but I want to know what is the objection to the presentation of the *ad interim* report of the Select Committee. Is there any objection?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes, because it revives the Bill which is dead and gone. You will notice from the report of the Select Committee itself that the Committee never met.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: It is neither dead nor gone.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Item VII relates to the Select Committee on the Bengal Medical Amendment Bill, 1937. That Bill was the Bill sponsored by Rai Sahib Anukul Chandra Das. Under no stretch of imagination can this be treated as an *ad interim* report. It is no report at all.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am not going into the merits.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Today on what was the Minister speaking? If he was speaking on the presentation of the report this point has got to be decided first. If the Hon'ble Minister wants to regale the House with a good speech—and he is capable of making a good speech—we shall certainly be obliged when the occasion comes.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: I am really surprised. I do not know anything about any agreement. I went to say my Magreb prayer and I was informed that this would be taken up. There was no agreement between me and the Hon'ble Speaker.

With regard to the objection which has been raised by Dr. Sanyal this is his old *ad hoc* objection that he always raises. That objection is not valid at all. In view of section 19 no Bill referred to a Select Committee lapses, if its time is extended. It is pending in the Hon'ble Speaker's list. This Bill was referred to a Select Committee. The contention of Dr. Sanyal is not supported by the rules nor by the Government of India Act. I am very sorry that you were taken by surprise. There was no agreement and the Hon'ble Speaker never told me anything that it had been passed over.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The fact is that it was passed over by the Speaker. I was told to follow the items as usual and I did it. I do not know of any agreement. I do not know whether any point of order was raised.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I never said that there was any agreement between myself and the Government.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order. I am on my legs. I sent a slip to the Speaker and I have received instructions from him that I should continue as usual and not deal with items III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, VIIIA and VIIIB. So it is not for me to take up those items.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: It is really surprising that Dr. Sanyal tried to create an impression in this House that the Government went back on their agreement. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I never said that.) Perhaps there was an agreement between the Hon'ble Speaker and Dr. Sanyal. As a matter of fact, there was no agreement between the Hon'ble Speaker and

the House. I think, Sir, it was not fair to us to say that the Hon'ble Speaker had passed over these items without the knowledge or consent of the House. But that is another matter altogether. I make it absolutely clear that there was no agreement either between the Hon'ble Speaker and the House or between the Hon'ble Speaker and the Government. If the Hon'ble Speaker had passed over——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: At the request of the Hon'ble Chief Minister.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Apart from that I have no objection to this being passed over if that was the wish of the Hon'ble Speaker. We do not press that you should be required to give a ruling at this stage.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will now take up item XXV.

Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL: Sir, I beg to move——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: In two other cases I have not allowed any other member to move the motion in the absence of the person in whose name the motion stands.

(Passed over.)

The Bengal Fisheries Bill, 1943.

Mr. MD. ABDUL HAKIM VIKRAMPURI: Sir, I beg to move that the Bengal Fisheries Bill, 1943, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of—

(1) the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department,
(2) Mr. Abdul Karim,
(3) Khan Bahadur Aulad Hossain Khan,
(4) Mr. Yusuf Ali Chowdhury,
(5) Khan Bahadur Abdul Wahab Khan,
(6) Kazi Abul Masud,
(7) Rai Sahib Anukul Chandra Das,
(8) Mr. Monomohan Das,
(9) Mr. Upendra Nath Edbar,
(10) Mr. Dhananjoy Roy,
(11) Mr. D. Gladding,
(12) Mr. J. W. Chippendale,
(13) Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal,
(14) Mr. Surendra Nath Biswas,
(15) Maulana Maniruzzaman Islamabadi, and
(16) Mr. Md. Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri (the mover),

with instructions to submit their report by June 30, 1944, the number of members forming the quorum being five.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is there any objection?

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Government has no objection in accepting this motion.

The motion of Mr. Md. Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri that the Bengal Fisheries Bill, 1943, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of—

(1) the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Revenue Department,
(2) Mr. Abdul Karim,
(3) Khan Bahadur Aulad Hossain Khan,
(4) Mr. Yusuf Ali Chowdhury,
(5) Khan Bahadur Abdul Wahab Khan,
(6) Kazi Abul Masud,
(7) Rai Sahib Anukul Chandra Das,
(8) Mr. Monomohan Das,
(9) Mr. Upendra Nath Edbar,
(10) Mr. Dhananjoy Roy,
(11) Mr. D. Gladding,
(12) Mr. J. W. Chippendale,
(13) Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal,
(14) Mr. Surendra Nath Biswas,
(15) Maulana Maniruzzaman Islamabadi, and
(16) Mr. Md. Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri (the mover),

with instructions to submit their report by June 30, 1944, the number of members forming the quorum being five was then put and agreed to.

The Bengal Village Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1941.

Mr. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ: Sir, I beg to move that the Bengal Village Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1941, be continued under the proviso to rule 19(2) of the Bengal Legislative Assembly Procedure Rules.

The motion was then put and agreed to.

The Bengal Alienation of Agricultural Land Bill, 1944.

Mr. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ: Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce the Bengal Alienation of Agricultural Land Bill, 1944.

(The Secretary then read out the short title of the Bill.)

Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned at 7-32 p.m. till 3-30 p.m. on Monday, the 6th March, 1944, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Monday, the 6th March, 1944, at 3-30 p.m.

Present:

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI) in the Chair, 13 Hon'ble Ministers and 188 members.

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Expenditure for pump irrigation schemes.

***145. Maharaja SRISCHANDRA NANDY, of Cossimbazar:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Communications and Works Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) (*i*) the number of, and

(*ii*) the sites selected for the pump irrigation schemes undertaken by the Government on the advice of Sir William Stampe;

(*b*) capital expenditure incurred for each scheme, including the expenses incurred for Diesel oil-driven pumping sets;

(*c*) estimate of approximate additional crop outturn from the lands improved by each scheme; and

(*d*) recurring expenditure likely to be incurred for each scheme?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR (on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prasanna Pain): (*a*) (*i*) Two. Site for another is under consideration.

(*ii*) One at Khosaghata near Chuadanga, district Nadia. A second at Maharajpur near Kumarganj, district Malda.

(*b*) Each scheme will entail initial capital expenditure of approximately Rs.26,500.

(*c*) Detailed information is not yet available, but as a conservation estimate the crop yield will be increased by at least 80 per cent.

(*d*) Rs.4,000 approximately per annum.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the exact place where this scheme will be given effect to in the district of Malda?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: The exact place is given here It is near Kumarganj.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Malda is a big district. We want to know the exact place.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: Kumarganj is a railway station on Godagari-Katihar section.

Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state where Khosaghata is situated?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: Khosaghata is situated near Chuadanga.

Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: Under which thana?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: A member coming from Nadia knows better than I do.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the distance between the village of the Parliamentary Secretary, Mr. Atul Chandra Kumar, and the place where this pump has been fitted?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: It is fortunately only eight miles.

Progress of irrigation scheme by pumping recommended by Sir William Stampe.

*146. **Mr. M. A. F. HIRTZEL:** (*a*) With reference to his reply to starred question No. 75 on the 28th September, 1943, will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) what progress has been made with the exploratory work to test the feasibility of irrigation by pumping as recommended by Sir William Stampe;

(*ii*) whether the search for three suitable sites has been completed;

(*iii*) if so, what are the sites;

(*iv*) what progress has been made with the twelve irrigation schemes approved by Sir William Stampe and in respect of which the Government of India have sanctioned a 50 per cent. contribution; and

(*v*) what is the position of five more schemes referred to in the reply to starred question No. 75, on 28th September, 1943, as having been submitted for approval?

(*b*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to give particulars of the twelve schemes referred to as approved and sanctioned and the five more schemes submitted for approval?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR (on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prasanna Pain): (*a*) (*i*) Two sites for starting pump irrigation have been selected and the necessary plants purchased. These are now being installed and irrigation is expected to start next month.

(*ii*) Two sites, as stated, have been selected; a third site is under consideration.

(*iii*) The sites already selected are at Khosaghata near Chuadanga, district Nadia, and Maharajpur near Kumarganj, district Malda.

(*iv*) and (*b*). A statement is laid on the Table.

(*a*) (*v*) The five schemes referred to have since been approved, and the Government of India have sanctioned 50 per cent. contribution for each of them.

Statement referred to in reply to clauses (a) (iv) and (b) of starred question No. 146.

Emergency irrigation schemes in furtherance of the Food Production drive approved by Sir William Stampe, the Irrigation Adviser to the Government of India, for the execution of which the Government of India have sanctioned 50 per cent. of their estimated cost.

Name of schemes.	Estimated cost.	Probable expenditure during 1943-44.	Probable expenditure during 1944-45.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Improvement of the Gomai Mardan *Bil*, police-station Hathazari, Chittagong.	24,888	10,000	15,000
2. Barabil Drainage Scheme in the district of Murshidabad.*	18,081	..	..
3. Khairamari *Bil* Drainage Scheme in the district of Murshidabad	19,921	4,000	16,000
4. Excavation of a drainage channel from Auliapur *Bada* to the Peali river in the district of 24-Parganas †	1,57,114	70,000	90,000
5. Chalinda-Gazna Project, police-station Bongaon, district Jessore.†	28,000	12,000	16,000
6. Constructing marginal embankment and repairing the old *bund* along the Nowee *Khal* in Chandpur Union, district 24-Parganas.†	3,500	3,500	..
7. Re-excavation of the Durgapur Babla *Khal* in the district of Bakarganj.†	26,343	8,000	18,000
8. Silt clearance of the Brahmandia *Khal*, police-station Babuganj in the district of Bakarganj.†	14,164	5,000	9,000
9. Re-excavation of the Kharia river in police-station Phulpur in the district of Mymensingh.†	30,731	9,000	22,000
10. Scheme for draining the Sita Bita *Bil* in Chuadanga subdivision in the district of Nadia.†	57,833	38,000	20,000
11. Scheme for the improvement of the Chiroha Panchuha *Bil* in Jaypurhat thana, district Bogra.†	61,354	10,000	51,000
12. Excavation of a channel for draining the Takipur *mauza* in the district of Khulna †	3,164	1,000	2,200

*The work has been completed. Information regarding the actual expenditure incurred is not readily available.

†Work on the schemes has been started. Preliminary arrangement for starting work on the remaining schemes is being made.

Name of schemes.	Estimated cost.	Probable expenditure during 1943-44.	Probable expenditure during 1944-45.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
13. Re-excavation of the silted-up portion of the Bholbhola *Khal*, police-station Feni, district Noakhali.	4,596	2,000	2,600
14. Kachikata *Bil* Scheme, police-station Monohardi, district Dacca.†	15,500	4,000	12,000
15. Silt clearance of the Kharaikhali *Khal* in the villages of Kharaikhali and Gazalia, district Khulna.†	19,863	6,000	14,000
16. Re-excavation of the Basail *Khal*, police-station Gournadi, district Bakarganj.†	65,052	12,000	53,000
17. Constructing a low earthen *bund* round Dhopa *Bil* in *mauzas* Karara and Nazirmunshi in the district of Mymensingh.	22,791	7,000	15,800

†Work on the schemes has been started. Preliminary arrangement for starting work on the remaining schemes is being made.

Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how these sites were selected—who selected these sites?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: Sites were selected by experts and approved by Sir William Stampe.

Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether public opinion was taken into consideration in selecting these sites?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: Sites that have been selected have been welcomed by the public of the locality.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: What are the main conditions and reasons for which these sites were specially selected?

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA KUMAR: Because they were considered by the experts to be more suitable.

Distribution of paddy seeds, etc., in Pabna district.

*147. **Maulvi AZHAR ALI:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Agriculture Department be pleased to state—

(*i*) what quantity of—

(1) *aus*, and

(2) *aman*

paddy seed was allotted for the Pabna district during the last sowing season of 1943; and

(*ii*) the rate of price of each kind charged from the cultivators?

(*b*) Is it a fact that—

(*i*) no *aus* paddy seed was available in the district agriculture office while sowing commenced at Pabna;

(*ii*) no *aman* paddy seed was given at all; and

(*iii*) the small quantity of *aus* seeds sold to the cultivators at Rs.16 per maund did not germinate?

(*c*) Is it a fact that no potato seed was given to Pabna for distribution last time?

(*d*) Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the quantity of gram and mustard seeds that were given to the Pabna district last year?

MINISTER in charge of the AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Khan Bhadur Saiyed Muazzamuddin Hosain): (*a*) (*i*) (1) 2,000 maunds.

(2) 4,000 maunds.

(*ii*) For *aus* seed—Rs.12 per maund.

For *aman* seed—Rs.20 in cash per maund or 1½ maunds of grain for each maund taken as loan.

(*b*) No.

Actually 2,097 maunds of *aus* and 4,122 maunds of *aman* seed were distributed. The seed was subjected to the germination test and only seed of good quality was distributed.

(*c*) Yes. There was no demand.

(*d*) Gram seed—438 maunds.

Mustard seed—244 maunds.

Babu MADHUSUDAN SARKAR: With reference to answer (*a*) (*i*) (*1*) will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that there was more demand for seeds from the side of the agriculturists, but no seeds were given to them?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Yes, the demand was much more than what was actually distributed there. It was impossible to meet the entire demand.

Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the time of sowing *aus* paddy and the time when seeds reached the district?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: The sowing of *aus* paddy commences from the months of April and May generally and in some places it goes even to the middle of June and distribution of seeds was made in the month of May and part of June.

Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: Will the Hon'ble Minister consider the desirability of enquiring whether seeds actually arrived in the district when the sowing season was over?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Seeds were there; they were purchased from the locality and distributed there.

Mr. A. M. ABDUL HAMID: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is a fact that no seed was available in the locality and there was no distribution of seeds?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: In most cases, seeds were purchased from the district where they were distributed.

Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what was the total demand from cultivators for *aus* and *aman* paddy?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: There is no figure showing what the exact quota was, but the demand was very great. In fact, we could not meet even 25 per cent. of the demand.

Mr. ABUL HOSAIN AHMED: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether seeds supplied in many cases were useless and were not good seeds?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: In some cases they were found to be of bad quality.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason why in spite of insistent and increased demand from the side of the peasants there were no proper arrangements to supply them with seeds?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: The demand for *aman* seeds alone was so great that if all the demands were to be met, it woud cost Government Rs. 52 crores which is impossible for any Government to meet and so we had only to give to those who were absolutely in need and who were the poorest—those people only were supplied.

Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether adequate arrangements have been made to meet increased demands this year?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: This year the demand is not very great—rather it has decreased.

Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the same opinion holds good regarding those districts where the *aus* crop is the main crop?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Yes, the Government policy is not to supply seeds in any area unless there has been a failure of crops. In the areas where there has been a failure of crops, Government tries to meet the demands of the needy people.

Sugarcane cultivation in Pabna district.

***148. Maulvi AZHAR ALI:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Agriculture Department be pleased to state if it is a fact that there has been a total failure of sugarcane this year in the district of Pabna?

(*b*) Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that no sugarcane cultivation is possible for the present year for want of sugarcane cutting (seedling purpose)?

(*c*) If the answers to (*a*) and (*b*) are in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) what is the cause of this failure, and

(*ii*) what arrangement is being made for supply of sugarcane cuttings for the cultivation of this crop in the district?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: (*a*) No. The outturn has, however, been below the normal due to serious damage caused by insect-pests and unfavourable weather conditions.

(b) Out of a total allotment of 6,250 maunds of cuttings for the district, approximately 3,936 maunds were distributed up to the 15th February, 1944.

(c) Does not arise.

Babu MADHUSUDAN SARKAR: With reference to reply (a) that the outturn has, however, been below the normal, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what is the source of this information of Government?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: That is the report of the Director of Agriculture.

Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the total outturn in the previous year?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: I want notice.

Babu MADHUSUDAN SARKAR: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware of the fact that almost all over the district sugarcane was damaged by insects?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: It is down there already in the reply. It has been affected by insect-pests and unfavourable weather conditions.

Fallow and culturable waste lands in Bengal.

*149. **Maharaja SRISCHANDRA NANDY, of Cossimbazar:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Agriculture Department be pleased to state—

(a) the total area of lands in Bengal classified as—

(i) fallow, and

(ii) culturable waste other than fallow;

(b) the total area of agricultural land in Bengal occupied by the military authorities and rendered unavailable for agricultural purposes; and

(c) the total area of "fallow" and "culturable" waste other than "fallow" lands brought under effective cultivation, since the "Grow More Food Drive" was undertaken by the Government?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: (a) According to Settlement Final Reports—

(i) the total area of land in Bengal (excluding Darjeeling and the Chittagong Hill Tracts) classified as current fallow is approximately 1,341,313 acres and that of land classified as old fallow is approximately 1,929,110 acres; and

(ii) the total area of cultivable waste land in Bengal (excluding the Chittagong Hill Tracts) is 37·25 lakhs of acres.

These figures were actually collected by a plot to plot survey, but in view of the fact that in most cases they were collected many years ago and that no revisional settlement has been undertaken except in isolated areas, they are now out of date.

For the Season and Crop Reports, the Director of Agriculture has, on the basis of information supplied by District Officers, adopted much lower figures, viz.:—

(i) Fallow—4,618,000 acres.

(ii) Cultivable waste—900,000 acres other than fallow.

It is feared these figures, not being based on a plot to plot survey, are probably guess work.

(*b*) and (*c*) The information is not readily available and cannot be collected except by making an enquiry which will involve an expenditure of time, money and labour which will not be commensurate with the benefit likely to be achieved.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he means to say that after the "Grow More Food" campaign has been started, Government has kept no information about areas of fallow and culturable waste which have been put under cultivation?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Government had no staff and up till now Government have no staff, but presently a development staff has been appointed. I hope in future Government will be able to give exact figures of waste lands reclaimed.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government has got any information as to any area of fallow and culturable waste lands being put under cultivation under the "Grow More Food" campaign?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Government has no information except the report of the Director of Agriculture.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us whether the lands which have been occupied by the military have been acquired under the Land Acquisition Act and records have been kept in the Government office?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: No; everywhere lands have not been acquired under the Land Acquisition Act. In most cases they were requisitioned. In some places they were acquired under the Land Acquisition Act.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any records have been kept in the Government office?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: I cannot say that. It is for the Revenue Department to answer.

Maulvi AHMED ALI MRIDHA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether after the "Grow More Food" drive all the fallow and culturable lands will be put under cultivation during 1944-45?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: It is not possible to reclaim the entire waste lands in one year, but every attempt will be made to reclaim as much as possible.

Maulvi ABDUL LATIF BISWAS: With reference to answer (*b*) and (*c*) will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any scheme has been made to ascertain the total area of agricultural land occupied by the military authorities?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Some attempt has been made, but it is kept as a military secret and cannot be disclosed.

Maulvi AHMED ALI MRIDHA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state in view of the answer he has given if he has got any definite scheme of "Grow More Food" campaign, so that lands which are fallow and culturable can be brought under cultivation within a limited number of years?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: So long we had no scheme. We are just going to have schemes because so long we had no staff to prepare such schemes.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: With reference to answer (*a*) (*i*) and (*ii*) will the Hon'ble Minister consider the desirability of starting surveys of all kinds of waste lands with a view to reclaim and bring them under cultivation within a very short time?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: The development officers would be entrusted with the work of finding out different waste lands which are possible of cultivation within a short time and at a reasonable cost.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: With reference to answer (*b*) will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us if he enquired of the Revenue Department for replying to this question when he got notice of this question?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Not with reference to this question, but I had communications with the Revenue Minister regarding this and I came to know that it was a military secret; so it cannot be given out

Mr. MIRZA ABDUL HAFIZ: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how much of the fallow and culturable waste lands have been brought under cultivation last year?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: That is not possible to say. As I have said, we had not got any staff to collect any statistics of that kind.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(Answers to which were laid on the table)

Supply of foodstuffs to people at cheaper rate.

63. Mr. PRATUL CHANDRA GANGULI: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Civil Supplies Department be pleased to state whether any arrangements have been made for supply of adequate foodstuff and other essentials of life to the whole people of Bengal at cheaper rates within the purchasing capacity of the poor?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the negative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reasons therefor?

MINISTER in charge of the CIVIL SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy): Steps have been taken as far as possible to check the rise of prices and to ensure that foodstuffs are available to all people at reasonable prices.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government has considered or is considering any

scheme for supplying foodstuffs at cheaper rates to poorer people to whom prevailing price is prohibitive or outside their capacity?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Yes, it has considered and is considering.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to give an outline of the scheme that the Government is considering to adopt in order to give relief to the poor class in the way suggested?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: I submit, Sir, not at that stage.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: With reference to the answer that steps have been taken as far as possible to check the rise of prices will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us the prices in different districts to show how far Government have been successful in their steps to check the rise of prices?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps Government propose to take or have taken to ensure that foodstuffs are available to all people in deficit outlying mufassal areas?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise. "Deficit outlying area" is a different thing. "All' in the answer includes the poor people of mufassal also.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: Sir, there are more poor people in mufassal than in the urban areas. My question is, what are the steps that have been taken to ensure that foodstuffs are available to all poor people in rural areas in Bengal.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is in the question and the answer is given to that question. You are now bringing in the question of deficit outlying areas. That question does not arise at all.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: Sir, my question is what steps have been taken to ensure that foodstuffs are available to people in rural areas in Bengal.

Mr. SPEAKER: He has already given that answer.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what steps have been taken to ensure that foodstuffs are available to poorer people in the mufassal areas?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: I am sure the honourable member is aware of something which is known as the *Aman* Procurement Scheme of the Government of Bengal, and secondly, the honourable member is also aware that we are sending foodgrains from Calcutta to various stations and also sending foodgrains from wherever we can procure them to areas in need of them.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister kindly tell us what does he mean when he says "at reasonable prices"?

Mr. SPEAKER: You want an explanation of the expression "reasonable"?

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Yes, Sir.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Reasonable as opposed to unreasonable.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government is considering the necessity of keeping stocks of paddy and rice in each union for supplying the same to the poor people at cheaper rate?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: I do not think it will be necessary to do so. I do not wish to be drawn into a discussion on the entire scheme of distribution that we are framing, but if my friend wants me to answer his question I may say that I do not think it will be necessary to keep stocks in each union.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government have arrived at any approximate standard as being the standard of reasonableness?

Mr. SPEAKER: I think he has already answered that question.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he is prepared to assure the poorer people that they will get rice and paddy in their union at cheaper rates?

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is very vague.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: The Hon'ble Minister will not give out the scheme——

Mr. SPEAKER: That is another matter. Will you make your supplementary question clear?

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: I shall make it as clear as daylight. Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he can assure the poorer people of this province that paddy and rice will be supplied to them at rates within their purchasing capacity?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: It arises, Sir, in this way——

Mr. SPEAKER: You want an assurance and that is a different thing.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: In view of the transport difficulties, will the Government consider the desirability of establishing visible stocks in rural outlying areas to create confidence in the minds of the people from now?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: I cannot see how it arises out of this question.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have not been able to hear you.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: The Hon'ble Minister said that he was sending rice. In view of the well-known transport difficulties, will the Government consider the desirability of establishing visible stocks and godowns in outlying rural areas from now to create confidence in the minds of the people?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: I again submit that it does not arise. That is part of the scheme which I have placed on the floor

of the House time and again that it is the policy of the Government to move foodgrains to deficit districts and to put the same in godowns all over the province.

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: Sir, the main question has not been answered.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is another matter. You are again discussing. Will you kindly resume your seat for a moment?

Mr. CHARU CHANDRA ROY: It is my right to draw your attention to the fact that the main question has not been answered.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have seen the question and I have seen the answer. I have also followed the supplementary questions. The whole point is that the question itself is vague and the answer also is of a vague nature. It speaks of steps being taken for supplying foodstuffs to the poor people within their purchasing capacity, so many vague and indefinite things. If you want to discuss them you can do so for days together. That is not permissible in a supplementary question. Today you can put a question and if you are not satisfied with the answer there is the Supplementary Budget discussion in which you can raise that point.

Mr. SURENDRA NATH BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what arrangements are being made for supply of adequate foodstuffs and other essential supplies to the poorer people at cheaper rates within the purchasing capacity of the poor or Government is not considering the question of making any such arrangement?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: The answer is there.

Requisition of fuel wood by Subdivisional Officer of Vishnupur in Bankura district.

64. Mr. KAMAL KRISHNA ROY: (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Civil Supplies Department aware that—

(*i*) the Subdivisional Officer of Vishnupur in the district of Bankura seized, under Defence of India Rules, the stock of fuel wood of Srijuts Ramoni Mohan Mohapatra and Gokul Chandra Singha; and

(*ii*) he compelled them to give over their stock to the proprietor of Vishnupur Rice and Oil Mills at a price considerably lower than the market rate?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the reason for the actions of the Subdivisional Officer referred to in (*a*)?

(*c*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the negative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to consider the desirability of holding an enquiry into the matter?

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: (*a*) (*i*) Yes, a portion of their stocks of fuel was requisitioned to keep the local mills employed in husking Government paddy in order to supply rice to cheap grain shops meant for the public.

(*ii*) It is not a fact that they were compelled to sell at below the market rate.

(*b*) Does not arise.

(*c*) There appear to be no grounds for any further enquiry into the matter.

Mr. KAMAL KRISHNA ROY: With reference to answer (*a*) (*i*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he is aware of the fact that fuel is supplied only to the mills favoured by the Subdivisional Officer in question and not any other local mills?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: That was the mill which was converting Government paddy into rice.

Mr. KAMAL KRISHNA ROY: But the answer is that local mills are supplied with fuel to keep them going.

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: That particular mill wanted fuel which was supplied.

Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether adequate price was paid to that firm?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Yes, at the market rate.

Mr. KAMAL KRISHNA ROY: With reference to (*a*) (*ii*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what actual steps have been taken to ascertain whether it is a fact or not that they were compelled to sell at a lower rate?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: These gentlemen were asked to supply the fuel and they gladly gave their fuel to the rice mill.

Srijut MANINDRA BHUSAN SINHA: What is your source of information?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Government agency.

Mr. KAMAL KRISHNA ROY: In view of the answer just given will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to go there and investigate into the matter and find out whether it is a fact or not that not only a portion of the fuel was taken but all the fuel was taken and at a lower rate?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: No, for the quantity of fuel that was taken the price was paid at the market rate and so Government do not see any necessity to go to the locality to make an enquiry.

Non-availability of rice in a ration shop.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: May I at this stage mention a matter, Sir? Now that the Hon'ble Minister for Civil Supplies is here, I want to draw his particular attention to a very serious situation that has arisen at a Government ration shop at Manshatala Lane, Kidderpore. Since Thursday last there is not a particle of rice available there during Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and today. I have made personal enquiries and have come to know that no rice has been sent to that shop at all during these days. That shop, I am told, has got 2,500 registered customers. I am drawing the attention of the Hon'ble Minister to this case as such a situation might arise elsewhere also. This locality is very thickly populated by Bengalis. I invite his attention to this matter so that such lapses may not recur in future.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: May I say one thing with regard to this, Sir? It appears that the honourable member has been in possession of this fact for the last four or five days——

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: No; I got the information only yesterday.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: I can assure the honourable member that any such matter brought to my notice with be dealt with immediately.

General Discussion on the Supplementary Budget Estimates.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we rise to discuss generally the supplementary estimates presented to this House a few days ago. On a previous occasion when the main budget estimate for 1943-44 was presented, we found it difficult to express in adequate terms the budget that was prepared by the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Bengal's finances. But so far as the supplementary budget estimate is concerned, we find little difficulty in finding a suitable nomenclature: it is simply "বার হাত কাঁকুড়ের তের হাত বিচি। We had an original budget for only about 25 crores of rupees and this budget covers more than 36 crores and it covers as many as 20 demands, and more. It has been said by the Hon'ble Minister in charge that the Government of Bengal had little knowledge of the actual amount that would be involved at the time when the original budget estimate for 1943-44 was passed by this House and therefore he could not give any indication to the House of the liabilities that we were then carrying.

I submit, Sir, that it does not redound to the credit of the Finance Department over which the Hon'ble Minister presides to say that they were utterly incapable of estimating the total or even an approximate amount that would be needed which, they knew towards the latter part of the year, was going to be in the neighbourhood of 36 crores. I personally have a little better respect for the department and I think the department knew very well and as a matter of fact they had schemes already before them involving larger expenditure and to say the least, it was a misdirection given to the House when the original budget estimates for 1943-44 were presented and the House was called upon to vote that demand. The Public Accounts Committee that sat in November last had recommended that in future the Government should see that as soon as or at the earliest possible opportunity when the Government came to know that the additional expenses were likely to be incurred, they should come to the House and obtain votes on their demands. Sir, I submit that we are passing through emergent conditions and grave emergencies required grave and bold steps. The unprecedented emergency that this province had passed through required an unprecedented measure. But, Sir, when large expenses from public funds are to be made it is only fair that there should be a proper machinery immediately set up to see that in the name of emergency wasteful expenditure may not be incurred. We shall try to place before the House, Sir, during the detailed discussions on various grants in the course of these two days—today and tomorrow—and later on which particular items of expenses in our view have been wasteful. But probably it will not be out of place

if I point out a few of them at this stage for admittedly some of these works have been recognised to have been useless and the schemes scrapped.

The first useless expenditure that was incurred was admittedly in the setting up of a Distributing Trades Tribunal.

Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL: On a point of order, Sir. Can he raise these points in connection with the demand for supplementary grants before the motions are moved?

Mr. SPEAKER: All this is by agreement between your Government side and the Opposition; so, no such question arises.

Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL: I want to know, Sir, how long it will continue.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: For one hour. The setting up of the Distributing Trades Tribunal was done under circumstances which are well known and at that stage we in the Opposition pointed out the absolute uselessness of that money. We have thereafter noticed how it has failed to have any proper list of distributors in this province determined. The whole money has been wasted. I might incidentally mention the charge that the Secretary of that Trades Tribunal took his wife as his Secretary and Personal Assistant and paid her money out of public revenues. These were some of the items which in the name of emergency had been allowed to pass through the vigilant eyes of the Finance Department. The appointment of Mr. McInnes—although personally I have little grievance against him as an individual—was also ultimately found to have failed in his objective. Large advances that were given to Messrs. Ispahani and Company were at this stage considered to be necessary and useful for the purpose of maintaining supplies to this province. This also was subsequently proved to have been utterly useless and even now I am informed that some of the alleged purchases of the Ispahanis have been lying rotting in adjoining provinces in the possession of persons other than the Government of Bengal. Similarly, Sir, there have been special allowances given to Government servants who have changed their position from a seat in the Writers' Buildings to a seat at 7, Church Lane. Just because they had to be dislodged from Writers' Buildings to Church Lane, they were given additional emoluments. I fail to understand what can be the justification for increased emoluments to this set of public servants. I would not multiply these instances but I would only mention two other things, namely, the appointment of one Transport Officer, a European again, Mr. McIntosh Whyte, who has been, as we apprehended in the beginning and mentioned in the House, utterly a failure and it was a thorough waste of public money on him. He knew nothing about transport condition and it is a wonder why such men are ever taken and his successor also has been a similar booby who knows nothing about Bengal's transport condition. The whole thing is now being successfully organised, done and managed by Major-General Wakely and his brilliant military staff, and if this is being managed by Major-General and his staff what justification can there be to maintain a number of additional white officers who knew nothing and know still nothing about Bengal's transport conditions. It is nothing short of sheer patronage.

There have also been attempts to whitewash Government action in certain directions with the help of so-called experts. I am informed, Sir, that having failed to justify the statistics of *aman* and *aus* crop in this province Government had during the last few months entrusted that work to be verified by an eminent Statistician of this province and that Statistician was permitted to draw nearly 4½ lakhs of rupees. He submitted a scrappy note of about three or four typed sheets—a brilliant contribution after digesting 4½ lakhs of rupees. I understand, Sir, that Government wanted from that officer a detailed statement as to the place or places where the work was actually undertaken and the number of persons who were entrusted with the collection of statistics, but he has refused to submit that report. We want to know the details of how that money was spent.

Sir, the commission allowed to Clearing Agents accounted for large amounts and it is common knowledge that the rate permitted to the Clearing Agents has been very much beyond what anything in normal trade would justify. And last but not least, Sir, the commission that was allowed to a few selected European millers of wheat was something stupendous. As you might be aware, Sir, there was a great furore in this country—not only in Calcutta but also in Delhi—about the disparity between the price of flour and wheat products delivered in Bengal and the price at which wheat was collected from the Punjab. It is surprising, Sir, that although the Civil Supplies Department knew all about it, yet they allowed a very large and unconscionable rate being levied by a limited number of European firms who undertook or were mainly entrusted with the milling of that wheat into flour.

Sir, there have been other instances but I will not detain the House today with all of them. If occasion arises I am prepared to place all the details of such wasteful expenditure before the House in due course. There has been maladministration in the Civil Supplies Department—in almost every branch of it. This is largely due to the selection of a certain class of officers who either had been old, senile or retired and who have been put back on the job or who have been selected for considerations other than efficiency. Amongst them are officers, Hindus as well as Muslims, and there is one Deputy Controller of Rationing working with the Controller of Rationing about whose conduct the public have grave misgivings. Sir, if placing of ill-equipped and incompetent officers and carelessly selected assistants and spending lakhs of rupees is the criterion of success, this Government's rationing and food policy has been a success, but I submit little relief does come to the people at large out of this.

Sir, the procedure for delivery of articles even now continues to be cumbersome and extremely annoying. I shall not go into further details today. There have been complaints about the working of the office of the Controller of Rationing but curiously enough there is no machinery, no possibility of any complaint being heard by any appellate authority. Once one underling officer comes to a decision no hearing is possible either with the Deputy Controller of Rationing or with the Controller of Rationing. The Controller of Rationing is a thoroughly unapproachable person. Letters, submissions or appeals receive no reply. If anybody wants to take the time of the Hon'ble Minister, the Hon'ble Minister is patient enough to give a hearing, but when he sends that letter back to the department either for

further investigation or enquiry it goes into the bottomless pit and no reply can possibly be obtained thereafter. There is no machinery of hearing complaints and everybody thinks that to hear complaints against any Government officer is a sin.

Sir, I would not like to dilate on other aspects of the present budget estimates, but at this stage, Sir, I feel it my duty to invite the attention of this House as well as of others outside to a very sad exhibition of slave mentality by the present Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University. It was exhibited in course of his Convocation Address delivered last Saturday. That self-appointed leader of public opinion or rather the nominee of the Chancellor in a most fulsome and disgusting manner voiced an abject flattery of the new Governor and a nauseating appreciation of the virtues of the late Governor. We have nothing against the personal qualities or ability of Mr. R. G. Casey, our new Governor, but, Sir, there is not one Hindu or one Muslim—and I state this on the authority of representative Muslim organs and representative Hindu public press—that has not expressed his definite resentment at the appointment of an Australian publicman as the Governor of Bengal.

Mr. A. F. STARK: On a point of order. Has that anything to do with the supplementary budget?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It does not arise.

Mr. A. F. STARK: Can it be expunged?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, our present Vice-Chancellor is an eminent physician. I personally owe a deep debt of gratitude to him for his assistance and help in the medical direction. I would like to submit to him who at one time at least had some connection with the Congress and who now basks under official favour to stand up as a man and look more to his profession than to public affairs, because for one who would now still look up to Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as patrons and friends it does not look well that he should give expression to an opinion in a manner which is derogatory to national self-respect.

Sir, I would only hope, and I presume that I am correct, that Dr. Roy's fulsome flattery to the present Governor is not actuated through any motive of self-interest with a view to shut out a Muslim Vice-Chancellor who may be likely to follow him in the course of a few months. I hope that the country will take proper note of such irresponsible utterances.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg leave of the House to offer a few observations in course of the general discussion on the supplementary budget with regard to certain aspects of the province, namely, food, medicine and cloth.

So far as the question of food is concerned, in spite of all that has been done by the present Governor to gag expression of what the Government considers to be an adverse opinion, in spite of what is being done by the Government to silence constructive criticism of representative people, the fact remains that the province is not only not out of the wood yet from the effects of the last famine, but it is again getting entagled in the meshes of another and more devastating one in the near future. When representatives of the people speak astray which is not convenient or

comfortable to the Ministry their opinion is criticised as public agitation, but, Sir, that fact remains that people who are criticising the Government in connection with food are exactly those who not only did their duties to the public but also did a lot to put the Government itself under obligation. The situation was colossal; the magnitude of the sufferings is far too big for any Government not to speak of the present Government to cope with and it is only expected that before seeking to gag public opinion Government will show different ways of appreciation of the services rendered by different sections of the public.

Sir, one fact remains undoubtedly clear, and that is this: that today in the midst of this season following the harvesting of bumper crop in the province the prices show no indication of coming down to any reasonable level, although the Hon'ble Minister in answer to a question said that Government are taking steps for making rice available at a reasonable cost. Government presumably has its own ideas of reasonableness, but even that idea is not disclosed. But we know for ourselves that the price which is ruling all over the province today is not only not within the reach of poor people but also outside the reach of the lower middle class who forms the backbone of the society.

Sir, the "Grow More Food" campaign remains as a slogan of the Government to use on paper and leaflets, but as a matter of fact may I put to the Government this question, namely, whether during 12 months anything has been done for implementing the "Grow More Food" campaign to any reasonable extent. Sir, I am speaking from my own experience in the mufassal districts. Thousands and thousands of *bighas* of land are lying waste. The attention of Government has been drawn repeatedly to the possibility of utilising these waste lands for fruitful purposes, but nothing has been done.

Sir, in my district again as you know and have heard or have read in the newspapers golden crops just on the eve of cultivation are every year inundated by certain floods which take away the food from several thousands of people. I had the honour of drawing the attention of Government to a particular case of inundation, and I asked for petty irrigation and construction works to be undertaken to stop the inundation, but at a time when the province seeks food most, the heart of Writers' Building is not moved to any extent at all.

Sir, you know Government have talked a lot about distribution of seedlings for paddy and other food crops. May I tell you and through you, Sir, to the House today that in very few places actually seeds were distributed. I may tell you about instances in which Government contractors with the assistance of the Agriculture Department below the very nose of the Agricultural Officer advanced money to the agriculturists and obtained receipts for paddy. Sir, money had its utility for some time, but money in place of seed is a colossal mockery and a huge joke. Would you believe me, Sir, that after I had drawn the attention of a District Officer to this matter the District Officer far from remedying the evil, far from removing the contractors, far from taking to task the Agricultural Officer who was conniving at the whole matter gave new contracts to those contractors and did not do anything in this matter at all. There is a big Agriculture Department, and it is expected that that department

would stand by the people in this dire need of the hour. But things move in the old fashion with this new element that distress is aggravated ten-fold.

Sir, the question of manpower and cattle is a paramount question in relation to man, and I am convinced that this Government are not only unable to give proper opening but are even unwilling because there is no initiative. It cannot be denied today that next year a large section of the lands will remain fallow, because able-bodied cultivators are not available and cattle have gone into military stomach. Sir, may I enquire what is the resolution in the mind of Government. The Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture the other day in reply to a question said that he was in touch with the India Government and the India Government was sympathetic. Mere abstract touch and mere abstract patronising sympathy are things which add insult to the injury. What is the present plan of this Government and what is the plan the Government propose to place before the India Government and the military authorities? Sir, I propose to give one. I do not know whether it will be appreciated by the Treasury Benches. The present form of cultivation seems to be a matter of the past today, particularly when manpower and cattlepower are so much at a deficit. The only substitute is tractor machine. We know, Sir, that American Powers are supplying several thousands and thousands of jeep cars, motor cars and other motor cars in order to implement military equipment on the borders of this province. We find every day and hour how thousands and thousands of cars patrol in the city—I do not know for what reason. May I ask the Bengal Government to make a requisition to the Government of India to get a supply from America of several hundred tractor machines? If these tractor machines are available then not only thousands but millions and millions of acres of culturable land which are lying fallow and which will certainly lie fallow for want of cattle and man power will be brought under cultivation to the immense relief of the people of the province and to the great credit of the Government of the day. Even before these tractors arrive there are these jeep cars which presumably are idle, because they are running for civil population and on the civil streets. Representations are worthwhile being made by this Government for requisitioning the use of all these jeep cars for the purpose of cultivation, for these jeep cars have got tremendous power and if ploughs are tacked to them I maintain and I am convinced that cultivation can be improved in the course of a fortnight. After all, the question is whether Government are willing to consider this problem, in a spirit of reality or in a spirit of academic interest to be discussed and debated only on the floor of the House.

In relation to this man-power, may I incidentally ask, if not from the political point of view, but from the economic and agricultural point of view, will the Government consider or are the Government unable to consider the question of large release of political prisoners who constitute a lot of man-power now rotting inside the jail? I am not speaking on political prisoners today. Lest my observations might be construed in a political spirit, let alone the political prisoners. But what about the other prisoners! There are prisoners who are inside the jail for years and years together. They are able-bodied people. There have been in the

past instances of releasing prisoners *en masse* for particular purposes. Even if the Government cannot accede to the request of releasing political prisoners on account of relief work, may I not expect the Government to stand up and take courage in both their hands and release a large number of ordinary prisoners who are able-bodied and who can conveniently plough all the fallow lands of this province? After all, why detain prisoners who are there for years? Why not release them who have already served out more than one year?

(At this stage the blue light was lit)

Will you kindly give me an extension of time?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please go on.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Sir, you know that sentences are given not on any fixed principles. One judge gives 5 years for an offence, another gives 3 years and another gives one and a half years for the same offence. There is no inflexibility in the standard of giving sentences. If the Government take up the question of these long term prisoners with a view to releasing them, they may put them on the utility of the soil. After all, the province has got to survive the trials and tribulations of today. Merely the vindication of law and order by putting people inside the four walls may be a very good proposition, but when the whole house is on fire you have got to requisition, you have got to mobilise, all possible human elements for the rescue of the whole province. Sir, may I draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister to the case of non-political prisoners? You know that they are called *goondas*. They have been externed from Calcutta, the metropolis of the province. They have been practically caught as rats and have been put into prison without trial. Some have been there for 6 years and some for 5 years. Nobody knows how long they have been there. They are people who might be very good soldiers in an independent country and they are nothing but *goondas* in this helpless country of ours. So much manpower is wasted and the Government ought to consider the question of utilising that manpower for the solution of the problem of the soil.

Then coming to the question of medicine, you know, and I venture to submit that at least four times more people have died of malaria during the last distress season than those who died of starvation, because people who could not pay for their food died of starvation but people who could pay for medicine also besides food died because there was no medicine and no quinine. With all the power I can command I say that if there is one man responsible for the murder of so many thousands and thousands of people due to malaria it is the present Director of Public Health. This Director of Public Health had at the beginning no scheme for distribution and supply of quinine. He came out with a scheme which was in force for only one month and then it was abandoned. A new scheme is being taken up every fortnight and the scheme is not at an end. The result is that people are not getting quinine and they are dying. Sir, the first scheme of the Director of Public Health was that in every thana one registered medical practitioner should be selected as the agent for distribution of quinine. The result was that the monopoly trade came into

existence. Some registered practitioners became monopolists and other registered practitioners had to wind up their dispensaries. Thousands and thousands of their patients could not get medicine, particularly quinine. And what is worse? You know that in the village side it is the quack unregistered practitioner who commands a larger practice than the registered practitioner. No arrangement was made, no arrangement even now is being made, for supplying quinine to the numerous unregistered practitioners so that numerous patients whom they had to treat did not get their quinine. Sir, I know here the military came to the rescue. They snatched away the quinine which was lying idle in the Department of Civil Supplies and it found its way to areas which badly needed quinine. Even today quinine is not distributed properly. It is not distributed efficiently and a large number of practitioners do not get quinine. The patients are not only suffering but they are even dying for want of this indispensable medicine.

Then coming to the question of cloth, if the province is hungry it is also naked and I do not find any indication on the part of Government to remove the nakedness of our brothers and sisters. As patronage Government gave some cloth which they requisitioned from their clientele and thought that it was all that they could do. I maintain that the whole province is not full of beggars. Even the lower middle class families who are in sore need would rather purchase their commodity than extend their hands to the Government. What provision has been made for them, when people have to pay fancy prices for their bare cloth and Government have not yet been able to devise or set up any machinery by which at the standard price the middle class and the poor people can get coarse cloth through their own shopkeepers in their own locality? All these observations, I submit, are not made in a purely fault-finding spirit but they are made so that Government if they are so minded can take up the question and arrive at a solution

One thing there is and that is Government have failed fundamentally in enlisting the co-operation of the non-official public. There are union boards, there are local boards, there are district boards and there are municipalities. Take the help of these institutions and have faith in them so that they can assist you in your hour of distress. If you do not extend your co-operation to the non-official organisations you cannot get any assistance from them. I would therefore appeal to Government to consider this question of co-ordinating all available resources so that co-operation and contribution in the cause of this common problem is forthcoming from all quarters in which lies the solution of the problem; otherwise, they will fail in future as they have failed miserably in the past.

Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: মাননীয় সভাপতি মহোদয়! দুর্ভিক্ষের ফলাফল এবং তার দুর্দ্দমনীয় দুর্নীতি যখন বাংলার চারিদিকে আত্মপ্রকাশ করিতেছে তখন আমরা বর্ত্তমান বৎসর এবং আগামী বৎসরের সরকারী ব্যয়-বরাদ্দ লইয়া আলোচনা করিতেছি। সমালোচনা করা যত সহজ ব্যয়-বরাদ্দ প্রস্তুত করা তত সহজ নহে। অভাবগ্রস্ত পিতামাতা যখন তাহাদের সন্তানসন্ততির আহার্য্যের জন্য চারিদিকে ছুটাছুটি করে তখন তাহাদের প্রতি আন্তরিকতা না দেখাইয়া যে সমস্ত ভদ্রমহোদয়গণ তাহাদের প্রতি ভিখারী ও চোরের মনোবৃত্তির ভাব আরোপিত করিয়াছেন তাঁহাদের প্রতি অনুকম্পা ছাড়া আর কি দেখান যাইতে পারে? বিপক্ষ দলের

বক্তৃতার ভিতর অনুসন্ধান করিয়াছিলাম কোন গঠনমূলক কার্য্যের প্রস্তাবনা। কিন্তু তাঁহাদের সমালোচনায় নিন্দা ব্যতীত অন্য কোন করণীয় কর্ত্তব্যের বিষয়ের আলোচনা নাই। দুর্ভাগ্যের বিষয় তাঁহারা কেবল নিন্দা করিয়াই ক্ষান্ত হইলেন এবং আরও নিন্দা করিতে প্রস্তুত।

এই দুর্দ্দিনে যে ভাবেই হউক, ঋণ করিয়া বা অন্য উপায়ে, অর্থসচিব মহাশয় যেমন করিয়া দুর্ভিক্ষ হইতে বাংলার জনসাধারণকে যতটুকু সম্ভব উদ্ধার করিয়াছেন ইহার জন্য আমি তাঁহাকে ধন্যবাদ দিতেছি। (A voice: সাধু) যদিও এই বরাদ্দের ভিতর এমন অনেক কিছু ছিল যাহা বহু পূর্ব্ব হইতেই গঠনমূলক কার্য্যে পরিণত করা উচিত ছিল এবং তাহা করা হয় নাই, তবুও সরকার পক্ষ হইতে আমি মাননীয় অর্থসচিব মহোদয়কে দুই-চারিটি কথা বলিতে চাই। বর্ত্তমান বৎসরের এবং আগামী বৎসরের আয়-ব্যয়ের বরাদ্দে এমন কোন কর্ম্মপন্থা নাই যাহার দ্বারা আভাস পাওয়া যাইতে পারে যে ভবিষ্যতে এই যে প্রকাণ্ড ঘাটতি ঘটিয়াছে তাহা সংশোধিত হয়। কোন দেশকে বাঁচাইতে হইলে এবং তাহার শাসনকার্য্য পরিচালনা করিতে হইলে কেবল ঋণ করিয়াই চলে না। দেশের কৃষি, শিল্প এবং বাণিজ্য হইতে যতক্ষণ না আয়ের ঘরের অঙ্ক না বাড়ান যাইতে পারে ততক্ষণ পর্য্যন্ত আয়-ব্যয়ের বরাদ্দ ঠিক রাখার চেষ্টা করা বিড়ম্বনা মাত্র। আমাদের এই বাংলার জমিতে, জঙ্গলে এবং নিকটবর্ত্তী সমুদ্রে যে সকল দ্রব্য উৎপন্ন করিতে পারা যায় এ পর্য্যন্ত তাহার কোন প্রচেষ্টা করা হয় নাই; এবং বর্ত্তমান বৎসরের বাজেটে এবং আগামী বৎসরের বাজেটে তাহার কোন প্রচেষ্টা দেখা যাইতেছে না। আমি মন্ত্রী মহোদয়কে এই কথা বলিতে চাই তিনি এমন কোন উপায় উদ্ভাবন করুন, এমন কোন পরিকল্পনা সম্মুখে রাখুন যাহাতে অতি সত্বর আমরা দেখিতে পাই যে শিল্পক্ষেত্রে এবং কৃষিক্ষেত্রে এই দেশ উন্নত হইয়াছে। চারিদিকে যুদ্ধের জন্য আমরা নানারূপ অসুবিধা ভোগ করিতেছি। অনেকে বলিয়া থাকেন যুদ্ধ-বিগ্রহের দিনে কখনই কোন উন্নতিমূলক কার্য্য হইতে পারে না। কিন্তু এরূপ অনেক ছোট-ছোট দেশ আছে যেখানে গত মহাযুদ্ধের সময় অনেক উন্নতি হইয়াছে। যেমন তুরস্ক গত মহাযুদ্ধের ফলে কৃষি এবং বাণিজ্যক্ষেত্রে সর্ব্বাপেক্ষা অধিক উন্নতি করিয়াছিল। এই মহাযুদ্ধের সময়ও এমন অনেক দেশ আছে যাহারা এই যুদ্ধ-বিগ্রহের সুযোগ গ্রহণ করিয়া অনেক উন্নতি করিয়াছে। কিন্তু আমাদের দুর্ভাগ্য ভারত যে তিমিরে সেই তিমিরেই রহিয়া গেল। ভারত বাণিজ্য এবং কৃষিক্ষেত্রে এমন কোন উন্নতি করিতে পারে নাই এবং এই যুদ্ধের সুযোগ লইয়া আমরা এমন কোন পরিকল্পনা তৈয়ারী করিতে পারি নাই যাহাতে ভবিষ্যতে আমাদের উন্নতি হইতে পারে। অথচ চোখের সম্মুখে দেখিতেছি আমাদের ঋণভার দিন দিন বাড়িয়া যাইতেছে। আমাদের এই বাংলাদেশের জমিতে সোণা ফলে, জঙ্গলে সন্ধান করিলে অনেক খনিজ পদার্থ পাওয়া যায়, একটু চেষ্টা করিলে সহজেই অনেক মূল্যবান বস্তু পাওয়া যায়—অথচ এই বাজেটে দেখা যায় তাহার কোন সুযোগ গ্রহণ করা হয় নাই। কেবল খরচ করা হইতেছে আয়ের সন্ধান নাই। অথচ অন্যান্য দেশে দেখিতে পাই খরচ সঙ্কুলানের জন্য আয় বাড়ান হইতেছে। আর একটা বিষয় দেখিতেছি এই বাজেটে "Grow More Food" পরিকল্পনা আছে বটে কিন্তু কার্য্যক্ষেত্রে দেখিতে পাইতেছি এই—বাজেটে তাহা কার্য্যে পরিণত করিবার প্রচেষ্টা নাই।

দেখা যায় ঢাকার Dairy Firm হইতে কিছু আয় হইয়াছে। যদি অন্যান্য স্থানেও এইরূপ Dairy Firm খোলা যায় তাহা হইলে যে শিশুগণ দুগ্ধের অভাবে মারা যাইতেছে তাহারাও বাঁচিতে পারিবে এবং সরকারের আয়ও বাড়িয়া যাইবে। সে সম্বন্ধে মন্ত্রী মহোদয়ের কোন কার্য্যকরী পরিকল্পনা নাই। অদ্যই এক প্রশ্নের উত্তরে কৃষি-মন্ত্রী মহাশয় বলিয়াছিলেন এইরূপ কোন জরিপ করা হয় নাই যার দ্বারা বলা যাইতে পারে কতখানি uncultivated land under cultivationএ আনা হইয়াছে, কত বীজ দেওয়া হইয়াছে এবং পতিত জমি কতখানি

উদ্ধার করা হইয়াছে, কত পতিত জমি বাংলাদেশে আছে যা ভবিষ্যতে Grow more food campaign এর কাজে লাগান যাইতে পারে। ইহা বড়ই দুঃখের বিষয়। এইরূপ প্রশ্ন করিলেই মন্ত্রী মহোদয়গণ বলিয়া থাকেন এইসব করিতে গেলে এত বেশী সময় এবং অর্থের খরচ হইবে যে তাহা করা উচিত হইবে না। গভর্ণমেণ্ট যদি ক্রমাগতই ঋণ করিয়া সরকারী খরচ চালান এবং আয় কিসে বর্দ্ধিত হয় সেদিকে দৃষ্টিপাত না করেন তাহা হইলে ভবিষ্যতে কোথায় গিয়া দাঁড়াইবেন বলা যায় না। আমি মাননীয় কৃষি-মন্ত্রী মহোদয়কে বলিতে চাই যে, এই যে জমি হইতে উৎপন্ন সংগ্রহ করার ক্ষেত্রে এত বেশী উপায় রহিয়াছে যে অতি সত্বর একটা সুনীতির উপর নির্ভর করিয়া একটা পরিকল্পনা সরকারের নিকট উত্থাপন করিয়া পাশ করাইয়া লওয়া তাঁহার উচিত।

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the last speaker on the side opposite broke his utterance with a very good wish. He offered co-operation and he offered joint effort in the elimination of our misery and distress and yet the constructive criticism he offered does not seem to be constructive in any aspect of it. For instance, the one remedy suggested by him is to run about in American Jeep Cars and to bring, in these days of Lend-Lease, steam tractors to run the agricultural process of this province in a mechanised way. People have heard of the horrors of this mechanisation in Ukrainian Russia where the poor peasant did not understand mechanisation and he had to be badgered into it. The loss in dead alone came almost to two to three million human beings. I do not understand where construction lies in asking the poor peasant of Bengal to give up his small holding. Unless and until the whole agricultural problem of Bengal is studied in a scientific manner and until we have got rid of Permanent Settlement, even a recommendation of this nature seems to be entirely out of place.

His predecessor, Sir, I take it was also equally constructive in his remarks. These were vitiated by his usual turn of mind. The Ispahani bogey has again been trotted out before the House today, and yet, Sir, with the fullest sense of responsibility I inform you that the critics of Ispahanis outside the privilege of this House have not yet dared to utter one word of the irresponsible braggings that have gone on under the protection of the privilege of this House and—what is more, Sir—when we bump against them outside the privilege, we are told "this is a party matter and we make political capital out of it, otherwise we know that the house of the Ispahanis is an honourable house, the house of Ispahanis is one of the best in the land" (Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Question) and—what is still more—business-houses in the same line the biggest—and I shall not mention their names—have gone to the Ispahanis and have said to them, "Please do something. It is you today; it may be our turn to morrow. These gentlemen are trying to torpedo the whole scheme of business in Bengal."

The other trend of the mind of that speaker, Sir, again reflects construction in the reverse order. To stand up in this House and attack officials who cannot defend themselves, to attack officials by their designation, of course without mentioning names and yet giving indications which leave no doubt about the personality of the officers, is not according to the rules of parliamentary game. If there is anything wrong, I take it that the Opposition understands that the person responsible before this

House is the Minister. If anything is done which is not according to the rules, he has to answer. They will not do that, but they will come and wash dirty linen of a very questionable character and that too in a very tattered condition and bring down the reputation of officials. I do not say all of them are good but then to lay down the principle that every official is this, that and the other is not correct.

The honourable member who spoke after him again brought back a matter on which we gave a decision the other day. He again repeated that criticism was being gagged. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, with my long experience of politics I may say that the gagging process is to be seen in its weakest form in this province of ours. Any and every statement on matters untrue is allowed to be published by the most generous-hearted Chief Minister. If I were in his place, I do not know what I would do.

Sir, bogies of rice and foodgrains, medicine and cloth have again been trotted out before the House. Taking advantage of the general chance of discussion, they go on repeating *ad nauseum* things which they know to be untrue. For instance, the honourable member does not know that millions and millions and millions of yards of Standard Cloth have come to Bengal. Bengal can get its own quota. There are other parts of India and all the mills in India *plus* all the cotton we grow and import can produce a certain quantity. No Government on earth can clothe, what he called, a naked nation. Those who cannot afford must be supplied food, but he and I can go about in tattered clothes or can buy clothes as and when we can manage to buy. How can they lay all this criticism at the door of the Government is surprising. And what is more surprising, Sir, is that they seem to think that they are the monopolists, as they were before the pre-autonomy days, even now of everything that leads to the common weal. I deny them that right. They have proved themselves to be the enemies of the majority of the population of Bengal. We cannot allow them to look at us even because their eyes also contain venom and vindictiveness. Therefore, leave Bengal to us; we are the majority, we are Muslims and so we shall take care of them as they themselves will never be able to do. Talking and talking and talking leads nowhere.

Sir, the history of the Tenancy Act, the history of the Money-Lenders Act and the history of every measure for the common weal of the people of Bengal, in which fortunately I happened to be with the majority, show that these worthy representatives of the minority have never supported them.

Sir, co-operation we welcome but co-operation sincere and genuine and not cheap, wordy co-operation.

Maulvi IDRIS AHMED MIA: আমরা দেখিতে পাচ্ছি যে কৃষি কার্য্যের উন্নতির জন্য manure এর জন্য ৬ লক্ষ টাকা ধরা হয়েছে। বাংলার অনেক জায়গায় যে কচুরিপানা অকর্ম্মণ্য করে ফেলেছে সেই কচুরিপানা দ্বারা লক্ষ লক্ষ টন সার তৈয়ারি করা যেতে পারে। Dr. H. K. SEN. ইদানীং যে একটা pamphlet বাহির করেছেন তা কৃষি বিভাগের Directorএর কাছে পাঠান হয়েছে এবং memberরাও বোধ হয় পেয়েছেন; তাতে দেখান হয়েছে বাংলাদেশে যে কচুরিপানা আছে তা যদি কাজে লাগান যায় তাহলে এই সারের দরুণ বাংলাদেশের ফসল প্রায় ডবল করা যেতে পারে। অথচ এইগুলি কাজে লাগান

হয় নাই। তারপর এই যে ৬ লক্ষ টাকা বরাদ্দ তা কিভাবে খরচ করা হবে তার বিবরণ জানান হয় নাই। তবে মোটামুটি বলা যায় বাংলাদেশের মাটিতে যেভাবে অক্ষমতা জন্মেছে, বাস্তবিক যদি ঠিকমত ব্যবস্থা না করা হয় তাহলে আবার একটা বড় রকমের দুর্ভিক্ষ বাংলাদেশে হবে, তাতে সন্দেহ নাই। যারা কৃষক তাদের শরীরে জোর নেই, পেটে খাদ্য নাই। গরু যা ছিল তা মিলিটারির পেটে গেছে। বাংলাদেশের বড় বড় হাটে যেখানে গরু বিক্রয় হয় সেখানে গেলে দেখা যায় হাজার হাজার গরু হাট থেকে চলে যাচ্ছে। আমাদের মালদহ জেলায় বড় বড় হাট আছে, সেখান থেকে হাজার হাজার গরু চালান হচ্ছে। এই বাংলাদেশের বাহিরে বিহার হইতেও সৈনিক মিলিটারির জন্য কত গরু চালান হচ্ছে। অথচ গরুর উন্নতি অথবা রক্ষার জন্য কোন ব্যবস্থা হচ্ছে না। চাষী মরছে, দেশে গরু নাই, কচুরিপানা এবং জঙ্গলে জমি ভরে গেছে। সার নাই। এই অবস্থায় কচুরীপানা ধ্বংস করে তাকে কাজে লাগাবার কেন চেষ্টা হয় না জানি না। গভর্ণমেণ্টের report এ দেখা যায় পৃথিবীর মধ্যে বাংলার মাটিতেই সবচেয়ে কম ধান এবং গম জন্মায়। এক একর জমিতে ইটালিতে ৫৭ মণ ধান এবং ১৫½ মণ গম পাওয়া যায়। জাপানে পাওয়া যায় ৩৪ মণ ২৫ সের ধান এবং ১৯ মণ গম, আমেরিকায় পাওয়া যায় ২৬ মণ ১০ সের ধান, ইংলণ্ডে পাওয়া যায় ১২ মণ ৩০ সের গম, ইজিপ্টে পাওয়া যায় ১১ মণ ১০ সের গম এবং সমস্ত ভারতের হিসাব নিলে দেখা যায় প্রতি একরে ১৭ মণ ধান ৮ মণ ৫ সের গম পাওয়া যায়। সেই ক্ষেত্রে বাংলাদেশের জমিতে মাত্র একরপিছু ১০ মণ ধান এবং ৬ মণ গম জন্মায়। কিছুদিন আগে কবি ডি. এল. রায় গেয়েছিলেন "ধন ধান্যে পুষ্পেভরা" কিন্তু এখন দেখা যাচ্ছে ভরা দূরে থাক পেট ভরবার মত শস্য উৎপাদন হয় না। আমরা গ্রামে বাস করি, সেখানকার অবস্থা জানি। যে চাষী ৪ খানা জমি চাষ করত সেখানে একখানা জমি চাষ হয় না। এই সব নানা কারণে বাংলার production কমে গেছে। Compound manure ব্যবহার করলে হয়ত কিছু উন্নতি হইতে পারে।

আর আমাদের বাংলাদেশে dearness allowance কেবল my dear দের দেওয়া হচ্ছে। Top heavy administration যত বেশী উপরে যাবে তত বেশী খরচ হবে। এখানে গরীবদের কোন স্থান নেই। এইরূপ বহু দৃষ্টান্ত দেখান যেতে পারে—যেমন গুরুট্রেণিং স্কুলের শিক্ষকদের ভাতা দেওয়ার ব্যবস্থা। পূর্বে এঁরা মাসে ৭।৮ টাকা বেতন পেতেন এখন অনেক লেখালেখি করার পর তাঁদের মাসে ১০৲ টাকা দেওয়া হয়।

তারপর অনেক weaving school এবং Industrial school উঠিয়ে দেওয়া হয়েছে। আবার অনেক স্কুলের পেছনে হয়ত ২।৩ শত টাকা মাসে খরচ হচ্ছে অথচ স্কুলে ২।৩ জনের বেশী ছাত্র নাই।

(At this stage the House was adjourned for 15 minutes.)

(After adjournment.)

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Are we to understand that the Hon'ble Finance Minister or any other Minister is not going to reply to the general discussions that took place?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think they are not going to reply. I understand that that is the agreement.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: I want to make it clear to the House that I have no speech to make for the delectation of the House. I thought that there was some sort of agreement about time between the whips of different parties.

DEMAND FOR GRANTS.

5—Salt.

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 23,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "5—Salt" during the current year.

As far as this grant is concerned I think many members have misunderstood the position and have sent in cut motions about subjects which do not concern this department. I am referring, Sir, to the second part of the cut motion of Mr. Dhirendra Nath Datta (No. 2) which talks about "the present shortage and non-availability of salt in many places of Bengal and rise in price of salt as a consequence thereof". As far as supply is concerned that is entirely a matter which is the concern of the Civil Supplies Department.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Let us have the motion moved and the Hon'ble Minister in charge will then reply, in the manner he likes. It is not yet known whether he has moved his motion.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, I asked him to speak because I had not the papers before me. Mr. Datta will now move his motion.

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: I had no intention of speaking at this stage, but as Mr. Deputy Speaker had not the papers before him he wanted me to speak and that was why I began to make my observations. I agree with Dr. Sanyal that the best course is for all of us to move our demands and then let the cut motions be moved separately. Afterwards we get up and explain any points that may be raised in discussing the cut motions. That would be the best course.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The procedure that has been suggested is that we shall follow the order that is given in the printed order paper. The Hon'ble Minister will move his motion, then we proceed with the next motion. Thereafter, the Hon'ble Minister may reply Then we proceed with the second demand motion. In that way we shall go as far as possible today. As far as voting is concerned it will take place tomorrow at 6 o'clock.

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: That would be rather inconvenient. It will be convenient for the House to know at what time a particular motion is going to be taken up, how long the discussion will go on and then when that motion will be put to vote.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: You will have to allow for replies to be given by the Hon'ble Ministers to particular sets of motions moved. If you leave all that towards the end would it not be very awkward?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let Mr. Datta move his motion and then afterwards you may agree amongst yourselves.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 23,000 under the head "5—Salt" be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of the motion is to raise a discussion about the failure of the

Government in the development of salt manufacture and the present shortage and non-availability of salt in many places of Bengal and rise in price of salt as a consequence thereof.

Sir, this is a motion of very urgent public importance because it deals with the primary requirements of human beings. The Hon'ble Minister in charge of this Department was just going to suggest that the second portion of my motion really does not relate to his demand under "Salt", but as a matter of fact it relates to supplies. My submission before the House through you is this that if there be salt manufactured in this province which is very close to the sea there would have been no difficulty in the matter of supply of salt. In this connection I beg to draw the attention of the House to the failure of Government in the manufacture of salt. This House is probably aware that in the year 1931 in the month of March there was a Gandhi-Irwin pact. By this pact, persons living in the coastal districts were allowed to manufacture salt for their domestic purposes but they are not allowed to manufacture salt for commercial purposes. Salt could have been manufactured as a cottage industry. Government have miserably failed to develop the cottage industry and the rule with regard to the Gandhi-Irwin Pact ought to be amended so that persons living in the coastal districts not only should be allowed to make salt for domestic purposes but also for commercial purposes. They should be allowed to sell salt in areas where salt cannot be manufactured. Recently my friend Mr. Abu Hossain Sarkar rose on a certain day to bring to the notice of Government the very critical situation arising out of scarcity of salt. In the northern Bengal districts, in Dinajpur, Rangpur and other places, salt is now selling at 12 annas to one rupee per seer. Salt is not available in many places In my own district which is close to the coastal district, viz , the district of Tippera salt is selling at 8 anans per seer. In all places salt is selling at an abnormally high price and it is not available even in certain places. In the district of Dinajpur Messrs. Cassim and Ismail were appointed as sole agents to supply salt in that district. They are to supply salt at the controlled rate, the rate being Rs. 13 per bag and the bag containing about 2 maunds of salt. But they refused to supply salt at that controlled rate. The District Magistrate intervened in the matter but to no purpose. For a month and a half salt was not supplied and the result was abnormal rise in the price of salt as well as non-availability of salt in certain places. The House is fully aware that salt is a commodity of prime necessity So long the cry of the people of Bengal was *dal bhat*, but now the cry is not *dal bhat* but *nun bhat*, and I regret, Sir, that even this *nun bhat* is not being supplied to the poor people of Bengal. That is the situation. In the district of Dinajpur. Messrs. Cassim and Ismail at first refused to supply salt to the people but subsequently they did after the people had suffered greatly for want of salt.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, you are aware that there was a prosecution started by the Government for sale of ½ seer of salt at Rs. 2 Sir, imagine the inconvenience to which the people of Bengal have been subjected on account of the abnormal rise in the price of salt and its non-availability in a province which contain so many coastal districts. If the Government was fully aware of and fully alive to the situation, salt could have been

manufactured in sufficient quantity to meet the necessity of the whole people of Bengal. Sir, the Government policy in this matter is this: they do not make any attempt to manufacture salt as cottage indusry. The explanatory memorandum here on the demand is this: the original provision was for the operation on experimental scheme for the development of salt as cottage industry for four months only in the current year, that is, in the year 1943-44. That scheme has been extended up to June, 1944, and after that the scheme will be abandoned. The result is that really no attempt has been made by Government in the matter of manufacture of salt and I would draw the attention of the Government to the utmost necessity of developing the salt industry and manufacture of salt in the province. Unless that is done, I am quite sure the people will die in thousands and lakhs on account of scarcity of salt as they have died from starvation. Not only the people of Bengal will die but also the cattle will die in numbers and this will affect the agriculture of the province to a great extent and for the matter of that, the people of Bengal as a whole. The result would be a disaster. I would give this warning to Government that unless they take steps for the manufacture of salt, the situation will be very serious. Already we have been receiving reports from different parts of Bengal that the price of salt is rising high and salt is not available in many places. Recently I went to Brahmanbaria where I found that the cultivators were purchasing salt in huge quantity apprehending that it would not be available afterwards If we speak about scarcity of salt, I know Government will say that we are creating panic. We are not creating panic but we are simply stating facts, and we are giving this warning to the Government that if they do not soon realise the gravity of the situation and take steps in the right direction, there will be absolute scarcity of salt throughout the whole province and both people and cattle will die in thousands and lakhs.

With these words, Sir, I move my motion and commend it to the acceptance of the House.

Khan Bahadur Haji BADI AHMED CHOUDHURY: Sir I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 23,000 for expenditure under the head "5—Salt", be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of my motion is to raise a discussion about the necessity of giving pecuniary help to the people of saltwatered places to prepare sufficient salt to make Bengal self-sufficient regarding salt. Mr. Deputy Speaker সাহেব, আমি এখানে লবণের বিষয়ে দু একটা কথা বলিতে ইচ্ছা করি। লবণ জিনিষটা সকলের পক্ষেই দরকারী। রাজা মহারাজা হইতে আরম্ভ করিয়া দীন, দরিদ্র, সর্ব্ব-সাধারণের পক্ষেই লবণটা অতি দরকারী জিনিষ। (Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK হাঁ হাঁ বলুন —অতি দরকারী।) এই লবণের জন্য বাংলাদেশে নানা রকম আন্দোলন সুরু হইয়াছে এবং এ বিষয় প্রায় প্রত্যহ খবরের কাগজে লেখালেখি আরম্ভ হইয়াছে। বাংলাদেশের কোন কোন জেলায় বর্ত্তমানে লবণ ৸০ আনা হইতে ১৲ টাকা সের দরে বিক্রয় হইতেছে। আমি মন্ত্রীদের নিকট আরজ করিতেছি—একমাত্র চট্টগ্রাম জেলা হইতে বাংলাদেশের জন্য প্রয়োজনীয় সমস্ত লবণ সংগ্রহ করিয়া দিবার উপায় আছে। কি উপায়ে সেটা সম্ভব তাহা আমি বলিতেছি।

গভর্ণমেণ্ট লবণ তৈরী করিবার যে স্কীম করিয়াছেন সেই স্কীম অনুসারে লবণ তৈরী করার বেলায় যন্ত্রপাতি প্রভৃতির ব্যয় লইয়া অনেক টাকা খরচ করিতে হয়। কিন্তু চট্টগ্রামের যে সমস্ত

জায়গায় লবণ তৈরী হয় সে সকল জায়গার লোকের পক্ষে লবণ তৈরী করিতে বিশেষ কিছু খরচ লাগে না। বাড়ীর পুরুষ মানুষেরা সমুদ্রের ধার হইতে যদি একমণ লবণের মাটি বাড়ীতে আনিয়া দেয় তবে মেয়েরা উহার জল টানিয়া ফেলে, তারপর মাঠ হইতে ছেলেপিলে শুকনা পাতা ও খড় প্রভৃতি আনিয়া দেয়। তাহা জাল করিয়া একমণ মাটি হইতে দশ সের লবণ অতি সহজেই প্রস্তুত হয়। এইভাবে চট্টগ্রামের সমুদ্রের উপকূলবর্ত্তী লোকদের দ্বারা অনায়াসেই লক্ষ লক্ষ মণ লবণ প্রস্তুত করান যাইতে পারে। কিন্তু তাদের সামর্থ্য থাকা সত্ত্বেও পুলিশ আর আবগারি বিভাগের কর্ম্মচারীদের বাধা দানের ফলে তারা ইচ্ছামত লবণ প্রস্তুত করিয়া সমগ্র বাংলাদেশের অভাব মিটাইতে পারিতেছে না। তারা যদি বলে গান্ধি আরউইন চুক্তি অনুসারে আমরা আমাদের ব্যবহারের জন্য লবণ তৈরী করিতে পারি কিন্তু তদুত্তরে পুলিশ আর আবগারীর অফিসারগণ বলেন "তোমরা দশ সেরের বেশী পাব না।" এইরূপে বাধা সৃষ্টি না করিলে, কত লক্ষ লক্ষ মণ লবণ তৈরী করিয়া এক চট্টগ্রাম হইতেই whole of Bengalকে supply করিতে পারে। সেইজন্য আমি গভর্ণমেণ্টকে অনুরোধ করিতেছি—এই অতি সহজ উপায়ে লবণ তৈরীর বিধি ব্যবস্থা গভর্ণমেণ্ট করুন। ইহাতে গভর্ণমেণ্টের বিশেষ কিছু ব্যয় নাই, কিন্তু লবণ প্রস্তুতকারীদের একটা বিষয়ে মাত্র সাহায্য দিবার প্রয়োজন আছে। তাহাদিগকে একটা করিয়া লোহার কড়াই দিতে হইবে, তাহা হইলেই লক্ষ লক্ষ মণ লবণ এক-মাত্র চট্টগ্রামই সারা বাংলাকে supply করিতে পারিবে।

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 23,000 for expenditure under the head "5—Salt" during the current year, be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this motion with a view to raising a discussion about insufficient supply of salt in Bengal.

The other day, Sir, I tried to bring it to the notice of this House as to the scarcity of salt that is prevailing in some parts of this province. Subsequently on the 10th February I submitted a short-notice question to know the cause of this insufficient supply of salt and what Government was doing to solve the problem. Unfortunately, up to this time I have not got any reply to it. I, therefore, presume that Government have nothing to say and they have nothing to do or that they are unable to do anything to do away with the shortness of supply. I move this cut motion again to bring it pointedly to the notice of this House and through this House to the public at large that this province and specially North Bengal is suffering very much from shortness of salt, and it is also reported in the papers and some of my honourable friends have suggested that a part of East Bengal is also affected.

Two materials are very much essential for the upkeep of human life; they are rice and salt. Rice is selling at prohibitive price and salt has become scarce. From my personal knowledge in my district, in the municipal area of Rangpur, salt is selling at the rate of Rs. 1-8 per seer in the black market, and black market is the only market where salt is available. I was talking the other day with the District Magistrate. He told me that at the rate at which Government supplies salt to their employees, Rangpur requires 50 thousand maunds of salt per month for consumption Unfortunately Government has allotted only 15 thousand maunds and therefore it can be presumed that at least three-fourths of the population will have to go to the black market or they will have to go without salt. What

is the Government doing to supply salt? I want a clear answer. Government will have to say very clearly whether they are able to do that or not. Poor people live on rice and salt, as I said, but if they can procure rice somehow or other, they cannot procure salt. Government is the only body which can supply salt and which can arrange for transport. I do not know from what disability Government is suffering whether there is insufficiency of salt or there is transport difficulty. Government must make a clean breast of everything. It must take into confidence all the party leaders so that they can help it. If the Government does not tell its difficulty to this House, if the people of this country cannot understand what is their position with regard to salt, misgivings and troubles may arise in the country.

It is the clear duty of the Government to help the people in getting this commodity. It is an essential commodity and the Government which is not in a position to supply even a grain of salt to the people, I think, has no right to exist. If it wants to justify its existence, it must supply at least the most important essential commodity, namely, salt.

I again ask the Government through you, Sir, to make its position clear why salt is not being supplied in sufficient quantity. What is the difficulty it is feeling and what is the trouble behind the scene—I would like to have a clear indication.

With these few words, Sir, I recommend my motion.

Maulvi MUHAMMAD ISRAIL: Sir, I have heard with attention the speech of the previous speaker and he practically exhausted all the points that could be said in favour of his motion. Now, so far as salt is concerned there are two aspects—one is the distribution side and the other manufacturing side. Distribution side, I understand, is under the Civil Supplies Department. So far as the present position is concerned the country is in acute shortage of salt That is dealt with by the Civil Supplies Department. It is supposed that there is salt shortage particularly in North Bengal, but I come from Mymensingh district in East Bengal There also salt shortage has become very acute now. I also ask the Government to make the position clear as to the reason why salt is not being supplied to the mufassal area. Is it due to transport difficulty, or is it due to the fact that sufficient amount of salt is not being transported to the province of Bengal from outside?

Sir, so far as the manufacturing side is concerned, we find that there is experimental measure taken by the Government of Bengal in three districts, namely, Midnapore, 24-Parganas and Chittagong. There also the measure has been extended up to June, 1944, and the amount provided for the experiment is also very inadequate.

So far as salt is concerned, as has been pointed out by the previous speaker, that is one of the most essential commodities of life, and when there has been embargo from all sides—Provincial, Central as also International—I think it is high time that Bengal should build up her own industry both on commercial basis as well as on cottage industry basis. Now, Bengal has a very good coastline. I think if this industry is pushed now when there is great demand of salt and when the price of salt has already gone up it can be done on a sound basis so that it can remain in that position during the time when the war will be over. Under the present

arrangement the villagers can produce salt in those three districts only for their personal consumption and only to the extent they can carry on their heads to the warehouses for sale. Now, the amount that has been produced in these three districts is too insufficient for this province. So I would request Government to take necessary steps to expand cottage industry as well as to put this industry on a commercial basis so that Bengal would not have to depend on other provinces for this commodity.

With these words, Sir, I ask Government to take necessary steps in this matter.

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: As has been pointed out by my friend Mr. Israil, this question has got two well-defined divisions—one is the production, manufacture of salt, and another is distribution throughout the province. As far as distribution of imported salt is concerned, it comes under the purview of the Civil Supplies Department and I hope my colleague Mr. Suhrawardy will be here in time to explain what step the Civil Supplies Department have taken in order to distribute sufficient quantity of salt in the province.

As far as manufacture of salt is concerned, there are two points that have been raised: one is manufacture of salt on commercial basis, another is as a small industry. As far as the Government of Bengal is concerned, it has already approached the Government of India and obtained their sanction to manufacture salt in all the coastal areas of Bengal under only one condition that whatever salt is manufactured is conveyed to a warehouse where the Government of India make arrangements for levying salt excise. Their officers are there and the salt that is conveyed in that warehouse is kept and anything which goes out from there the salt excise is levied on that and a very small levy for expenses incurred by the Government of Bengal for its staff is also made. But unfortunately the scheme could not be expanded very much. Only five warehouses have been established in the district of Midnapore and two in the 24-Parganas. Out of the five warehouses established in Midnapore only three worked last year, and this year five warehouses are working in Midnapore and two warehouses in the 24-Parganas also are working. But unfortunately so far as we know sufficient quantity of salt is not coming to these ware-houses. The reason is that the price of salt has gone up so much that people find it more profitable to sell un-excised salt from outside instead of bringing it here. According to Government scheme we have put down Rs. 2 as the minimum price for salt and all the other charges are being deducted. I would like to lay emphasis on the fact that this price of Rs. 2 is only the minimum. There is nothing there to prevent the persons who are running the warehouses from giving higher price. Actually they expect that they will have to pay higher price, because otherwise it will not be possible for them to induce the manufacturers to bring sufficient quantity of salt to the warehouses. Over and above that there is wastage and other expenses which they have got to incur. My friend Mr. Haji Badi has suggested quite a different matter that if the Government of India entirely gives up the salt excise and the revenue that is being derived out of it and allow everybody freedom to manufacture salt on a commercial basis, the situation may improve. I do not think it will be possible and we can reasonably ask the Government of India to give that general permission.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Why don't you move the Government of India for permission to manufacture salt?

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: They have already given permission——

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Free of tax?

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: We have not considered whether we can in view of the circumstances in the country approach the Government of India to allow them to manufacture salt free of tax.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: How far the Government of India have permitted?

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: I have just now said that the Government of India have permitted us to manufacture salt, provided proper arrangements have been made to levy salt excise at its collection and in order to make that collection we have created these warehouses where the Government of India have got their Excise Officers and they deduct the salt excise there.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: It will not be a sufficient inducement to salt manufacture.

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: That is a quite different question. I am prepared to consider the suggestion made from various quarters that the Government of Bengal should approach the Government of India in view of the great shortage of salt in the province to allow absolutely manufacture of salt free of excise duty. That is a matter worth considering, but so far we have not considered that question.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the warehouse scheme continue?

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: As far as I am concerned I was just coming to that point because it has been raised by my friend Mr. Israil. The scheme is only up to June. Actually the salt manufacture season begins from 11th November and continues till 11th of May and sometimes a longer season is found and it goes up to the end of May. These measures are absolutely experimental and that is why I have said that the season will continue up to June, but I can assure the House that not only this scheme will continue, but I will do everything possible to expand this scheme and establish cottage industries to manufacture salt through the coastal areas of Bengal (Cheers from the Coalition Party benches).

So far as the manufacture of salt on a commercial basis is concerned, I admit that we have not yet gone so far, but that matter is also under consideration and we are waiting for the report of the Industrial Survey Committee and as soon as that report comes, we will see whether or not we can set up even as an experimental measure a small factory for the manufacture of salt.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Already two expert committees have reported. Why a third? The committee is a wonderful machinery to put off things!

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: I can assure Dr. Sanyal that this will not take long. I have been assured by the Chairman of the

Industrial Survey Committee that the report is practically ready and it will be coming in very soon.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: By that time season will be over.

The Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja SHAHABUDDIN: As far as this year is concerned, we can do nothing to set up manufacture of salt. Sir, this thing has not been here for so many years and I submit that it is too much to expect this Government to take all the measures to establish factories throughout Bengal within one year. Though we have not been able to produce much result, as far as we are concerned, we are doing everything possible to manufactre salt both on a commercial as well as on cottage industry basis.

Sir, the Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy is present here, and before any other subject is taken up, I think he may also be permitted to speak on points which have been raised about shortage of salt, etc. If you like, the Hon'ble Mr. Suhrawardy will speak.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Sir, I humbly submit that a cut motion on salt which deals with the industrial side of the problem hardly entitles honourable members to raise the question of supply, but inasmuch as the matter has been raised and it is a matter of some importance and interest to honourable members I shall place before the House what the actual position is.

Honourable members are aware, I am certain, that practically the whole of our salt comes from outside. It either comes from Karachi or from the West Coast and Red Sea Ports. A certain amount comes or used to come by rail from Karachi and the West Coast Ports and was distributed to the districts directly The Government of India stopped the rail borne traffic and put us into difficulties I anticipated immediately that there would be a shortage of salt, and I started moving the Government of India that we must be assured a steady supply of salt from the West Coast Ports and the Red Sea Ports. Honourable members may also remember that there was a suggestion that we should build up a certain reserve of salt here which could be utilised in case communications broke down, and we were asked to have two months' reserves for ourselves and control over two months' stock. It is anticipated that the monthly consumption of salt is about 30,000 tons or a little over 8 lakhs of maunds. I made certain offers to the salt importers here regarding the salt imported by them, Government purchasing a certain quantity for the purpose of building up stocks. Various importers imported considerable amounts of salt which permitted Government to build up stocks. The position improved. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That started the trouble.) The position improved so much that I hoped that we should be very soon out of the woods. I approached however the Government of India that they should carry out their obligations to permit us to build up two months' reserves and therefore I asked them for monetary accommodation but they said that as the salt position in Bengal had improved it was not necessary for us to build up any reserves of our own. Nevertheless as a precautionary measure I drew upon the finances of the Government of Bengal to build up at least one month's reserve, i.e., 8 lakhs of maunds of salt. In the meantime, the Government of India failed to send the thirty thousand tons per

month which they had promised to do and put us into considerable difficulties. The position now is restored. The Government of India are taking steps to send 30,000 tons and salt is arriving in sufficient quantities. Owing to the stoppage of rail borne salt as well as non-import of salt for two months, there has been a shortage of salf in the districts. I made frantic efforts to send salt to the districts and have succeeded in a very large measure. Again honourable members may remember that there was congestion of traffic on the Bengal and Assam Railway from 15th January till 11th February and there was a set back in our programme. Salt is now going steadily to the districts and we shall very soon be in a position to send 26 trucks by that railway some more by the East Indian and Bengal-Nagpur Railways, and a considerable amount by water. Salt is also going by river—I am sending it by water as much as possible—and also by rail. We propose to accelerate this still further so that we shall be in a position not only to meet the present normal requirements because whatever salt we shall send now will probably go to consumption, but at the same time we shall be able to build up a reserve of 8 lakhs of maunds of salt in various distributing centres in Bengal as well as 8 lakhs of maunds of reserves in Calcutta. This is the present position.

7—Land Revenue.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 6,69,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "7—Land Revenue" during the current year.

Sir, at the present stage I would only briefly give the reasons for this extra charge.

Under "Charges of administration"—the increase is due mainly to heavier land acquisition work on behalf of the Government of India for which recoveries will eventually be effected from the Centre. It is also due partly to extra temporary staff in the Certificate Department to cope with the large number of certificates in connection with debt settlement cases.

Under the head "Management of Government Estates", the excess is mainly due to the cost of reconstruction of *khas mahal* buildings damaged by cyclone.

Under the head "Charges of Land Revenue Collection", the increase represents larger commission payable to headmen particularly in the Chittagong Hill Tracts for better collection of land revenue.

Under the head "Survey, Settlement and Record Operations", the increase under "Pay of Establishment—Executive Subordinates" and under "Travelling Allowance" is due to the reversion of a large number of kanungoes from special work to the Settlement Department. The increase under "Other Contingent Charges" is due to rise in the price of contingencies, and to dearness allowance granted.

With these few words I commend my motion to the acceptance of the House.

Khan Bahadur Haji Badi Ahmed Choudhury rose to speak.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Khan Bahadur Sahib, I am really in difficulty with your long list of cut motions. The time allotted to you has already been exhausted, and as a special case, I shall allow you two more minutes. You may move your motion No. 8.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Is it not open to any member of this House to give notice of cut motions?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, but he ought to have consulted the whips of different parties. I must also be fair to different groups of the Opposition and if I am to allow the same facilities to every member of various groups composing the Opposition, I cannot give more than three minutes to the Haji Sahib during the whole discussion. As a special case, I am allowing him two more minutes.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: On a question of privilege, Sir. Is it not open to a member who is not connected with any political organisation or group or party in the Legislature to ventilate his grievances and obtain protection of the Chair?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Most certainly; it is the duty of the Chair to see that other members also get their due share.

Khan Bahadur Haji BADI AHMED CHOUDHURY: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 6,69,000 under the head "7—Land Revenue" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this motion in order to raise a discussion about reduction of rent of lands in Chittagong and other districts under *khas mahal* estates.

এখানে আমি চট্টগ্রামবাসীদের দুঃখের কথা দুই একটা বলিতে চাই। চট্টগ্রাম জেলার প্রজা, জোৎদার, তালুকদার যারা তাদের দুঃখের কথা বাংলাদেশের অন্যান্য স্থানের লোকেরা জানে না। আমাদের দুঃখের বিষয় অন্যান্যের সঙ্গে তুলনা হয় না, সেই দুঃখের দুই চারিটা কথা আমি সংক্ষেপে বলিতেছি। চট্টগ্রাম জেলার survey হইবার কালে গভর্ণমেণ্ট বহু সম্পত্তি গ্রাস করিয়া লইয়াছেন। এবং বহু সম্পত্তি পরে হস্তগত করিয়াছে এবং বহু সম্পত্তি জমিদারের খাস হইয়াছে। খানবাহাদুর মোয়াজ্জেম উদ্দিন হোসেন সেখানে যাইয়া এগার লক্ষ টাকা জমা মিনাহ্ দিয়া আসিয়াছেন জমিদারদের গভর্ণমেণ্ট আরো সোয়া লক্ষ টাকা জমা মিনাহ দিয়াছেন। দুঃখের বিষয় গরীবদের প্রতি কৃপা দৃষ্টি করেন নাই। যারা দশ টাকার কম জমা দেয় তাদের হইয়া বলিতেছি—সেই গরীব প্রজাদের প্রতি দৃষ্টি নিক্ষেপ করেন নাই। তিনি তখন বলিয়াছিলেন আমি সময় অভাবে এ বিষয় কিছু করিতে পারিলাম না, অন্য officer আসিয়া এ বিষয় মীমাংসা করিয়া যাইবে। কিন্তু তার ফলে হইয়াছে কি? তাহাদের প্রতি সুবিচারের অভাবে—গরীব যারা, যাহাদের সামান্য সামান্য সম্পত্তি তারা যেখানে ১০৲ টাকা revenue দেয় আর প্রজার নিকট মাত্র ১১৲ টাকা পায়; মাত্র ১৲ টাকা মুনাফা পাইয়া তারা সম্পত্তি রক্ষা করিতে পারিতেছে না। তাহাদের সর্বনাশ হইতেছে। এ অবস্থায় গভর্ণমেণ্টকে অনুরোধ করিতেছি, তাঁরা যেমন সদয় হইয়া এগার লক্ষ টাকা মাপ দিয়াছেন, আর একবার গরীবদের প্রতি সদয় হইয়া দশ টাকার নীচে জমা যে সকল গরীব প্রজা আছে তাহাদের জমাটা কমাইয়া দিবেন।

এই সঙ্গে আমি আরো দুইটা কথা বলিতে ইচ্ছা করি,—গভর্ণমেণ্ট sale জারি যদি মাত্র ১০।১২৲ টাকার জন্য করেন তার process fee দিতে হয় ৪৲ টাকা। এই অবিচারের প্রতি গভর্ণমেণ্টএর দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করিয়া তদন্ত প্রার্থনা করিতেছি।

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the demands of Rs. 6,69,000 under the head "7—Land Revenue" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this motion to raise a discussion about the failure of the Government to give relief to tenants and proprietors of the soil in the matter of rent due to calamities in the province such as (*i*) famine, cyclone and flood, and (*ii*) failure of the Government to make adequate provision and arrangement including compensation for the civilian population in areas acquired or properties acquired or requisitioned for purposes connected with the war.

Sir, tonight I was thanking my star for having snatched away five minutes of your valuable time-table in order that you may be able to hear and enjoy the delight of my silvery voice. I thought my Hon'ble friend, the Revenue Minister, has a voice almost golden and I do look forward to the exposition of the supplementary demand which he has been making, in spite of my Hon'ble friend simply reading out, for whose benefit I do not know, the explanatory memorandum on page 3 of the supplementary budget estimate. If my eyes did not prove failing I discovered that my Hon'ble friend read out some typewritten copy *verbatim*. That no doubt accounts for certain extra charges on account of the administration. I should like to ask four questions of the Hon'ble the Revenue Minister. First, so far as I am aware, the previous Government decided to go slow in the matter of realisation of revenue and rent in regard to areas affected by the cyclone and floods. May I ask the Hon'ble the Revenue Minister if he has made a revision of that order: that order merely asked that the *zamindars* should show the same concession to their tenants as they would demand of the Government: in other words, that mercy I to others show, that mercy show to me. The second question is this: my Hon'ble friend is asking for a supplementary demand for the purpose of meeting extra expenditure in the matter of executing certificates. I thought the Legislature was in favour of abolition of the certificate procedure. Has the Hon'ble the Revenue Minister revised the policy of going slow in the matter of realisation of revenue by the device known as the certificate procedure? Thirdly, I should like to ask him the question as to what major settlement operations are being carried on in the province just now. Is it the settlement operations in connection with that unknown district on which the past Government wanted to build and utilise the recommendations of the Floud Commission or is my Hon'ble friend going back upon the decision of the previous Government as to the stoppage of major settlement operations in the province? Lastly, I am greatly amused to know that the charges on land revenue collections represents larger commission payable to headmen in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, but my Hon'ble friend in reading out the statement has said, "heads": I ask, is it "heads" or "headmen"? Then there is another question as to the payment of compensation to the civilian population in the matter of compulsory acquisition of their property in areas for purposes of war. Complaints have reached me and many members of the Opposition that many of the persons whose properties lands, etc., have been acquired compulsorily by Government, pursuant to the application of the Defence of India Rules promulgated by the Government of India for military necessity, they have either (*a*) got no compensation, or (*b*) not got proper compensation. In this connection,

may I ask the Hon'ble the Revenue Minister as to whether or not the arbitration clause in the Defence of India Act, 1939, section 18,—I am speaking from memory—whether the rules about the arbitration clause have been framed so that the party aggrieved may under the Act go to arbitration to realise possibility of proper compensation. Sir, I am very brief and I am thankful to you that I have finished within five minutes. And, after all, five minutes are very valuable because the present Government in the classical language of the Hon'ble the Finance Minister "in violation of all canons of Political Economy" are asking for a very small sum of Rs. 36 crores 24 lakhs and 48 thousand by way of supplementary demand within the course of two nights! Long may this Legislature live! It reminds one of the famous "Court of Miracles" of Victor Hugo. I will not describe the Court of Miracles tonight.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: As an humble student of Mr. Banerjee I will follow him as I have always done.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: I am thankful, Sir, for the compliments offered to me.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: As regards the point raised by Khan Bahadur Haji Badi Ahmed Chowdhury, I can assure him that his proposal will be duly considered by Government.

I shall now deal with the points raised by Mr Banerjee. As regards the realisation of revenue and rent in the cyclone and flood-affected areas, Government have been all along very considerate and have been following a very careful and considerate policy. Sir, in areas where the landlords have been given remission of revenues, they have remitted their rents. As regards remission of cesses I may tell the House that the matter is under the careful consideration of Government and Government hope to come to a final decision at an early date. As regards the use of certificate procedure it is well-known that the certificate procedure has not been allowed in any case by Government except in the case of *khas mahal* areas only as an experimental measure. It is applicable only in the case of those estates which are managed directly by Government but not estates managed by Government under the Court of Wards. As regards the kanungos the extra expenditure is due to services of more and more of kanungos being utilised——

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: I have not asked about the kanungos.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: As regards payment of compensation I may assure the House that although it was not possible to proceed with the work thoroughly and fully and quickly at the initial stage, better arrangements have been made now and due and proper compensation is being paid now to those whose lands and properties have been acquired. For the information of the House I may only mention that as much as 156,959 acres of land have been acquired and the total amount of compensation already paid comes to Rs. 3,15,12,715. In the mufassil this work is entrusted to the Collectors and Subdivisional Officers who have been doing the work and as is well-known to you and to the House, the Collectors and Subdivisional Officers are extremely busy awarding compensation in such cases. I admit that at the initial stage there

may have been some delay and mismanagement but I can assure the House that every possible step is being taken to thoroughly reorganise the work and to see that proper compensation for lands, buildings and removal costs is being paid without any delay and as early as possible. As regards the matter of referring cases to arbitration, the necessary rules have duly been framed and it is open now to any aggrieved party to go to arbitration whenever it likes. I hope my demand will be passed by this House.

9—Stamps.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Sir, I formally beg to move on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor that a sum of Rs. 1,30,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "9—Stamps" during the current year.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: On a point of order, Sir. Is it in form? When an Hon'ble Minister moves for demands, is not the form this "On the recommendation of the Governor of the Province"? My Hon'ble friend the Revenue Minister has omitted to mention the name of the Governor.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He mentioned "His Excellency the Governor". I think he said "I formally beg to move" and possibly he meant he won't make any speech.

Khan Bahadur Haji BADI AHMED CHOUDHURY: Sir, I beg to move that the sum of Rs. 1,30,000 for expenditure under the head "9—Stamps" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this to raise a discussion about cost of Judicial and non-Judicial stamps.

Sir, এই ষ্ট্যাম্প Actএর বিধান সম্বন্ধে আমার দুই চারিটি কথা বলার আছে। ষ্ট্যাম্প Actএর বিধান অনুসারে যে সকল ব্যাপারে ষ্ট্যাম্প দেওয়ার আবশ্যকতা নাই, কিন্তু বাংলাদেশের প্রায় সব জায়গার সবরেজিষ্ট্রারগণই সে বিধান মানিয়া চলেন না। প্রমাণস্বরূপ আমি উল্লেখ করিতে পারি—একবার একটা গরীব লোকের দলিল রেজিষ্টারীর সময় আমি নিজে উপস্থিত থাকিয়া সবরেজিষ্ট্রার সাহেবকে দেখাইয়া ষ্ট্যাম্প Actএর ধারা অনুসারে কাজ করিতে বলা সত্ত্বেও তিনি বলিলেন যে "ও ধারা আমি মানি না, আমার কাছে একটা manual আছে", সেই অনুসারে আমি কাজ করিব। সেইজন্য আমি অনুরোধ করিতেছি গভর্ণমেণ্ট যেন Stamp Actএ যা আছে তাহাই follow করিবার জন্য বাংলাদেশের সবরেজিষ্ট্রারদের কাছে নোটিশ প্রেরণ করেন। তারা যেন তোষামুদ করিয়া চাকরীটা বজায় রাখার চেষ্টা না করিয়া গরীবদের বাঁচাইবার উপায় করে।

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: মাননীয় সভাপতি মহাশয়——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You must speak in English.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: He once complained on this score, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There will be no complaint. You speak in English.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: On a point of order, Sir. Under the Government of India Act is it open to a member who knows English to talk in Bengali?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is why I am asking him to speak in English.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Sir, I will respectfully submit that our Hon'ble Speaker often allowed us to reply in Bengali.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would request you to speak in English.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: All right, Sir. As regards the observation just now made by Khan Bahadur Haji Badi Ahmed Choudhury I would submit that Government have not received any such complaints as he has just now placed before the House. But if any such complaints are brought to our notice, Government will be pleased to do their best to see that these things are not allowed. If he will kindly mention to me the particular places where stamps have been insisted upon in cases where they are not necessary, instructions will certainly issue to see that such things do not happen. I am thankful to him for this suggestion.

10—Forest.

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 11,97,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "10—Forest" during the current year.

Sir, I want to say a few words with regard to this demand. The bulk of this sum, namely Rs. 11,50,000, is required to meet increased expenditure for execution of larger orders received from the Supply Department, Government of India, to supply timber for the Defence Services than were anticipated at the time of framing the budget. In this connection I may mention that an additional amount of Rs. 66,000 under the charged head will be necessary for the same purpose in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. As the price of timber supply will be recovered from the Central Government, there will be a corresponding increase of revenue in this department, viz., Forest. The balance of Rs. 45,000 is required under the voted head "Establishment" to meet excess expenditure for payment of dearness allowance to the staff as the existing provision has fallen short of actual requirements.

Sir, with these few words I commend my motion to the acceptance of the House.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to move that the sum of Rs. 11,97,000 for expenditure under the head "10—Forest" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this to raise a discussion about indiscriminate supply of timber, etc., to the Government of India and the consequent deforestation and its possible disastrous results and to discuss about the abnormal rise in price of fuels.

Sir, in the explanatory memorandum of the demand under "Forest", it has been stated that under the first head "Conservancy and Works" the increase is due to the execution of larger orders for timber from the Supply Department, Government of India, than were anticipated at the budget stage. The "charged" excess is in respect of expenditure in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Sir, it is really due to the misdeeds of the war, it is on account of the war that the Government of India want a large supply of timber and consequently the Government of Bengal agreed to give a large supply of timber from the forests of this country. The result will be deforestation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, those who are inhabitants of the districts of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri—of course we have not got Government forests but we have got forests near about which do not belong to the British Government but to the Tripura State—know what a large quantity of timber is being supplied to the Government of India for war necessities. This House is probably aware that on account of the large supply of timber, the forests are denuded and there has been deforestation and if the war continues for some years to come, I am afraid that there will be deforestation in the province. The result of deforestation is probably not known to all of us. On account of deforestation, it is an accepted theory that there will be less rainfall and on account of less rainfall, agriculture will suffer to a great extent.

Sir, I shudder to think of the post-war condition and I shudder to think that if the war continues for four or five years more, so far as Bengal is concerned, she will suffer to such an extent that she will not be able to recover in the near future. This is one of the subjects which must engage the attention of this Government. They are supplying timber indiscriminately—I say criminally—to the Government of India on account of the war necessities. The war has come upon us. This is not a war for the independence of India. This is a war for the perpetuation of British Imperialism and our policy with regard to this war should be that we should not contribute a single pie towards it. But as a matter of fact, Sir, for this was not only are we contributing but we are contributing all our wealth. We have been practically drained of our wealth. Forest is a source of great wealth, and so far as the Bengal Government is concerned if there is deforestation I am quite sure it will be an evil day for certain parts of Bengal. The consequence will be so disastrous that I am afraid even after the war Bengal will not be able to recover from the mischief inflicted. I do not know, Sir, what the war will cost us. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would appeal to the Government of Bengal to consider this aspect of the question and not consider it once or twice but thousands of times as to what disaster will befall Bengal if the war continues and there is deforestation.

There is another aspect of the question which we should consider immediately, namely, the abnormal price of fuel. We do not know whether Government is aware that coal has become scarce in the mufassal area; it is not at all available. We have therefore to rely on fuel, but of late the price of fuel has gone up to such an extent that it is impossible for ordinary people to purchase fuel. So people will die not only on account of want of rice but I am afraid—and here I speak from my experience in my district and that is I believe the experience of other people everywhere—they will die also for want of fuel. So far as the district of Tippera is concerned and here I hope my friends will bear me out, we have to spend Re. 1 per day on fuel consumption for domestic purposes. This is the situation. Not only that, Sir; do you know, Sir, that on account of want of fuel dead bodies are not burnt nowadays? Dead

bodies are thrown into the river. That is the present practice, Sir. The result is that not only the river water is polluted but people drink that water and there is a consequent epidemic and outbreak of diseases. I hope, Sir, that Government should consider these things, which are very serious indeed so far as Bengal is concerned. I appeal to the Government and to you, Sir, to impress upon the Government of India the reality of the situation which has been brought about by the war. This war has cost us many things and we should be the first persons to declare that we must not contribute anything towards the war—a war which is for the perpetuation of British Imperialism and not for the independence of India.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I would like to add a few words to the brilliant statement made by our Deputy Leader. I support this motion also on another ground, namely, that the Government of India nowadays show very little courtesy even to our Hon'ble Ministers, when they travel on carriages which were constructed with the timber supplied by the Forest Department. Only the other day, the Hon'ble Minister of Forest was travelling by a train—may be without ticket (laughter)—he was hauled up at Ranaghat and penalty was realised from him. It is an atrocious conduct on the part of the Government of India representatives at Ranaghat.

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: It is a false information.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Co-operative Credit and Rural Indebtedness who was travelling in a second class compartment of the same train bear me out?

The Hon'ble Mr. JOGENDRA NATH MANDAL: These things are downright falsehoods.

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: As Ministers it is absurd to say that we did not buy tickets.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Why did you pay at Ranaghat?

The Hon'ble Mr. PREMHARI BARMA: Who says? Certainly not.

Sir, with regard to the point raised by Mr. Dhirendra Nath Datta, viz., that there may be deforestation, I want to say that deviations from normal working plans are carefully scrutinised and specifically sanctioned before any excess felling is resorted to. Conservation of forests being the main care of the department, it is out of the question to suppose that indiscriminate felling leading to anything like deforestation could be permitted. Before we do anything we will scrutinise everything carefully, so there is no fear of deforestation.

I may also mention for the information of the House that the Government of India have already been in communication with the Provincial Governments to co-ordinate a post-war policy on forest reconstruction. The main features of this policy as at present suggested are (*i*) revision of working plans to provide for lighter fellings for some years to allow of the replacement of capital lost by advance fellings during the war and (*ii*) a planned economy for the timber trade and for the development of India's forest estate.

As regards the price of fuel we have not made any enhancement whatsoever in the rates of royalty. The increase in the cost of fuel is due to

increase in wages of labour and transport difficulties. Those who are dealers of forest produce increase the rates for want of transport and it is not correct to say that we have increased any rate.

Sir, with these few words I oppose the cut motion moved.

11—Registration.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 3,90,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "11—Registration" during the current year.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 3,90,000 made under the head "11—Registration" be reduced by Rs. 100 to raise a discussion about the necessity of a proper enquiry into the circumstances leading to a large increase in the number of registrations and measures to check the same.

For the last few years we had been noticing an abnormal rise in registration and a corresponding increase in the stamp duties. We had tried to make an enquiry and in the Public Accounts Committee we sought to find out if the department concerned had any information about the reasons of such large increases in registration. This reflects a very unfortunate economic position of the people and consequently I feel that Government should take the earliest opportunity to ascertain whether these larger registrations are due to any temporary economic deterioration due to famine or other conditions during the emergency or due to any long term debt legislation, as a result of which wily money-lenders have been forcing actual transfers when there is the real intention of lending out money on security of the property alone and nothing more. This is a very serious matter and I understand that Government have already realised the seriousness of the situation to such an extent that they are proposing shortly a Land Non-Alienation Bill. I submit that in view of the situation that has arisen in the province Government should try to set up an enquiry to ascertain definitely from each rural area and with some amount of expert knowledge collected for the some, as to how far and to what extent these larger increases in registration are due to temporary economic deterioration or due to long term conditions affecting the economic ilfe of the province.

With these words I move my motion.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Sir, the question raised here or the request made is that Government should make an enquiry as to the causes of the large number of transfers that are taking place. One cause is obvious. During the food crisis the agriculturists were very hard hit to procure food they required money which they could not get otherwise than by transferring the land in a large number of cases. That is the real cause and I admit, Sir, that the situation is really disquieting. Government have already taken adequate steps to see that these agriculturists who have been compelled to transfer lands under the stress of circumstances may get back their holdings under certain conditions. An Ordinance was already in force and the complementary legislation passed through one House of the Provincial Legislature. It will very soon be

placed before this House also. That is what the Government have done. I admit, Sir, that the situation requires probably further consideration

As regards the suspicion of Dr. Sanyal that the cause may not be simply temporary but a deep-seated one on account of some other legislative measure that he hinted at, Government will consider when the proper time comes whether another more comprehensive measure is necessary to prevent agricultural lands from passing out of the hands of agriculturists. But I don't think that any useful purpose will be served by initiating an enquiry. We all know the real causes and it is only now necessary to take proper steps. We have taken immediate steps and as for the long term view we propose to take at the appropriate time measures to prevent lands from passing out of the hands of agriculturists.

(At this stage, the House was adjourned for 15 minutes for prayer.)

(*After adjournment.*)

13—Other Taxes and Duties.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 63,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "13—Other Taxes and Duties" during the current year.

Sir, I submit that the excess expenditure is mainly due to the excess cost incurred for printing the Entertainment Tax stamps which has become due since the Government decided to impose Entertainment Tax on cinemas in the mufassil also with effect from 1st June.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 63,000 under the head "13—Other Taxes and Duties" be reduced by Rs. 100 to raise a discussion about the hardship caused through the present procedure adopted to deal with registered dealers under the Bengal Finance Sales Tax Act, who had left Calcutta temporarily during the emergency of 1942-43 and came back thereafter.

Point of Privilege.

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: On a question of privilege, Sir. Some member of this House taking advantage of the freedom of speech has made certain statements which are false and those statements may get published in the newspaper. Their purpose is served. In the same way as Dr. Sanyal made certain allegations against certain Hon'ble Ministers, if I say that we also hear that Dr. Sanyal takes bribes and all that, will that be justified?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: It will be if true.

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: And if I say that he always takes big merchants to the Civil Supplies Department and takes money from them and if we make such statements taking advantage of our privileged position in this House, will the Hon'ble Speaker allow such statements to be published?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is very difficult to give decision on a matter which is absolutely hypothetical. With regard to the particular

matter my attention was not drawn at that time. Now, if you really seriously think about it, I shall have to call for the proceedings to examine what has been said and what has not been said. It is not possible for me to remember all these things. You can on some appropriate occasion bring this matter, and then Mr. Speaker or myself, if I happen to be here in his absence, will give a decision on this matter.

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: We beg of you, Sir, that these statements are not published and are expunged from the proceedings of the House.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, while moving——

The Hon'ble Mr. JOGENDRA NATH MANDAL: On a point of order, Sir. The statement made by Dr. Sanyal——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, this is not a point of order, and so I will not yield.

The Hon'ble Mr. JOGENDRA NATH MANDAL: It is a point of order, Sir. If false things are published in the newspapers, certainly it will not be to public interest. You have said that you will take action as to whether or not the statement of Dr. Sanyal should be expunged from the proceedings of the House after you have gone through them. But may I know, Sir, what will be done regarding its publication in the newspapers? I have stated that the statement of Dr. Sanyal is absolutely and maliciously false.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I have also stated that you have travelled with a second class ticket in a first class compartment. Both my statement and yours will come out in the newspapers. I am not afraid of that.

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: I may also say, Sir, that Dr. Sanyal has been found to be all along in Calcutta but drawing travelling allowance from his constituency to Calcutta.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order. Mr. Speaker and myself, on more than one occasion, have given decision as regards publication of proceedings of the House in the Press. Even the other day, I remember to have given my decision with regard to matters to be published by the newspaper agency. I may again tell you that it is not my business to see what part of the proceedings of the House the Press should publish and what part they should not. My business is to see whether certain things should go into the proceedings or not. That point was raised by Mr. Abdulla-Al Mahmood and I have given my decision on that, namely, that I will look into the whole proceedings and then I will decide whether or not that portion will go into the proceedings; and the point you have raised is no point of order. The matter has been fully discussed, and I hope you will not make any further examination and cross-examination of the same thing which is not at all desirable now.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, while moving this motion——

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: On a point of order, Sir. Will it not be in order if you direct the Press not to publish these things on which, as you have said, you cannot now at the present moment give your ruling as to whether they should form part of the proceedings or not?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, on this point of order I should like to make my submission. In any democratic legislature there is complete freedom of speech and if there is any observation made of an extreme character from one side, the other side can also use extreme language in characterising that thing, if they so choose it, to be false, malicious and whatever it may be. I submit, Sir, the Press is a responsible organisation: if they find any observation useful or necessary for their publication, they will certainly not misdirect the public outside and will reflect correctly the proceedings of the House in its true perspective. If the Press abuses its privilege, then the Government is there to take necessary action and the law of libel is there. Therefore, I submit, it is not within the competency of the Speaker to decide a matter of this character, and it should not be the usual practice of this House and particularly of the members of the Government party to seek to gag discussion and try to get proceedings expunged even when the matter may be very serious. Sir, I can give you this assurance that in case I am not in a position to substantiate later on my statement, I shall myself apologise to this House and withdraw the statement.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, you have got absolute right as regards what can be said and what cannot be said in this House. Dr. Sanyal's statement that there is absolute freedom of speech in the House is not correct. Our rules are definitely against it. Certain language cannot be used in the House and aspersions and insinuations also cannot be made here, and since your decision has not been given as to whether or not these things should be included in the proceedings, I think the Press should be asked not to publish them until the matter is decided by you. If you decide that the thing should be expunged, then certainly the Press cannot publish it. Supposing you have given your decision: instead of postponing your decision you have decided that this thing is to be expunged, may I ask you, Sir, whether the Press, under those circumstances, could have published that? I think, Sir, if they did, you would have called upon the Press for an explanation for a breach of privilege as has been done on other occasions in the past when the Press had been indiscreet. So if that proposition is accepted and if you have decided today to expunge anything that has been said, the Press cannot publish that. As long as the matter is *sub judice* I maintain that the Press should be asked not to publish it, because otherwise they will be doing something which would not have been allowed to them if you had given your ruling today.

Mr. PRAMATHA NATH BANERJEE: Sir, the Hon'ble the Prime Minister's speech resolves itself into two parts: first, with reference to your part of the obligation, namely, to expunge the proceedings of the House: that is for futurity. The second is that of your injunction prohibiting publication of certain matters mentioned in the House.

With regard to the first point, the Hon'ble the Prime Minister remembers perfectly well and I remember perfectly well too the circumstances under which these Assembly rules came into existence. The present point is absolutely governed by rule 12. Rule 12 is in this form, namely, that the matter of every speech must in the opinion of the Speaker be relevant to the matter before the Assembly. The question of irrelevancy is a question which should have been raised when that particular speech

was made and not two hours after. Secondly, "A member while speaking may not reflect upon His Majesty the King". It is not suggested by the Hon'ble the Prime Minister that any of His Majesty's Council of Ministers in this Province juridically speaking constitute His Majesty the King. Then, "reflect upon the conduct of the Governor-General"—none of the Hon'ble Ministers constitute the Governor-General. Then, "His Majesty's representatives for the exercise of the functions of the Crown in its relations with the Indian States or any Governor"—with reference to the Governor and with reference to the Governor-General it has been ruled here as well as at the Centre that in certain circumstances the reflections upon the conduct of the one or the other can be made in the Legislature and the proceedings are not liable to be expunged. "Use offensive expressions regarding the conduct or proceedings of the Indian or any Provincial Legislature" and "Reflect on any determination of the Assembly except on a motion for amending or rescinding it"—that contingency in this instance did not arise. "Except with the leave of the Speaker, discuss any ruling or direction or any order of the Speaker disallowing a question, resolution or motion"—that contingency also has not arisen. "Use his right of speech for the purpose of wilfully obstructing the business of the Assembly" —there was only merriment and there was no question of obstruction in this matter. Utter treasonable words. That expression "treasonable" requires definition. Is it constructive treason to cast any reflection upon any of the Ministers? (Mr. FAZLUL RAHMAN: We are not in a college.) I know you are not in a college but you are in a place which I described a few minutes ago as a Court of Miracles. Make a personal charge against any member. If it is a personal charge against any member, that charge was a charge which was levelled against the Government of India Act, 1935, and not against any member. There was no charge at all. There was simply, so far as I understand, a statement. Refer to any matter of fact on which a judicial decision is pending. I think the Hon'ble Prime Minister had a lapse when he stated that the matter is *sub judice*. I do hope that the matter has not reached that stage. The matter is not *sub judice* before a court of law because if it is a matter before a court of law unless the Prime Minister passes orders under the Defence of India Rules ——(Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Have you understood it?) I have understood the language of the Prime Minister much better perhaps than the representative of the Dacca University here. There is no judicial decision pending in a court of law—I do hope there will be no judicial decision at all in this matter.

The second part of the Hon'ble Prime Minister's speech relates to a request to you for an order prohibiting the Press from publishing this item of news. I submit, Sir, with the utmost humility that unless you clear the galleries and the Press, the Chair has not the right to prohibit the publication of certain items of news in the Press. The Hon'ble Prime Minister has that right under the Defence of India Rules. Whether he will exercise that right within the province in defence of estimable colleagues of his or not is a question which he will decide for himself as the Hon'ble Home Minister and, therefore, Sir, to invite your attention and to attract your jurisdiction and rivet responsibility upon you for the publication of items of news in the Press is, I think, very unkind, if not unfair to the Chair.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The presence of the Hon'ble Leader of the House at the time of the incident would have been actually useful and helpful. So far as I remember, the Hon'ble Leader of the House was not present when that incident occurred. So far as I can recollect Dr. Sanyal made certain observations and immediately they were repudiated by members in the Government party. So far as I remember the Hon'ble Mr. Mandal rose up and said categorically that the statement or observation of Dr. Sanyal was absolutely false. There were shouts from both sides. I allowed the Hon'ble Mr. Barma when replying to say categorically that the statement or observation of Dr. Sanyal was absolutely false. It was repudiated by several members, and so far as I remember when Dr. Sanyal made the observation I immediately stopped him and he did not proceed any further. The matter ought to have been brought to my notice just at that time. Of course it has come to me now and I am competent to give my decision, but I have already said that if I have to give a decision at all in this matter I will have to look into the whole proceedings. I am afraid it will not be fair on my part at this time to say that this thing should not be published in newspapers. I am sure the newspaper agency is a responsible body and certainly it will use its discretion in this matter. I am also sure that whatever happens inside this House at the time of heat, it is for the newspaper agency to use its discretion whether to publish it or not to publish it.

As for the point of order raised by Mr. Fazlur Rahman and Mr. Abdulla-Al Mahmood, if I am to give a decision, it will be fair on my part to look into the whole proceedings and see whether that was a personal attack and whether he meant any particular Minister by name. I do not exactly remember whom he meant. I was talking with somebody at that time. So I hope that this matter will not be dragged any further.

13—Other Taxes and Duties.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I only want to invite attention to one matter, namely, the hardship that is caused to a large number of assessees under the Sales Tax who had to leave Calcutta during the emergency and who subsequently came back. The present situation is that they are given notice by hanging in their premises and although they do not actually receive the notice they are penalised. I submit that this is creating a situation under which many *bona fide* businessmen had to take recourse to questionable means or methods to avoid assessment. This is bad both for the Government as well as for the trade, and I request the Hon'ble Minister to look into the question, and if there is really any point in it, to see if any improvement in the present procedure can be devised.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Sir, I am rather at a loss what to say regarding this amendment. So far as I am aware, no such case has been brought to the notice of the Government. If any such case is brought to our notice Government will certainly look into the matter very carefully, but it is rather impossible for the Government to trace such cases on their own initiative. However, I can assure Dr. Sanyal that if any such case is brought to our notice we will certainly look into the matter.

Irrigation—18—Other Revenue Expenditure financed from Ordinary Revenues.

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PROSANNA PAIN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 32,73,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "Irrigation—18—Other Revenue Expenditure financed from Ordinary Revenues" during the current year.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I beg to move that the sum of Rs. 32,73,000 for expenditure under the head "18—Other Revenue Expenditure financed from Ordinary Revenues" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this to raise a discussion about the unsatisfactory character of the immediate protective measures on the left bank of the Damodar.

Sir, while on the supplementary demand, we do not intend to raise a discussion on the general issue of the Damodar embankment as a whole and the protective measures so far taken on the same as well as proposed to be taken in future. All that I am now seeking the Hon'ble Minister's attention to is the immediate measure taken to strengthen the left embankment, the manner and the method of doing it and the results that are apprehended from the same. It is felt that instead of attempting to strengthen the embankment with a big and expensive earthwork on the left embankment, Government would have done very well to allow some controlled escapement at the point where there was a breach last year and nearabout the large embankments and viaducts made to protect the Grand Trunk Road and the East Indian Railway, so that flood water from that area might under proper control be diverted to the Hooghly on the upper reaches beyond the Hooghly bridge. I submit, Sir, the embankment that has now been undertaken will not be providing sufficient protection and expert opinion does not bear out that it will be in a position to stop more than 4 lakh cusecs of water pressure at those points. I submit, Sir, that in constructing these embankments many valuable landed properties are being destroyed. And a large number of tenants who were using the adjoining land for producing good amount of food have been suffering, probably irreparably. So far as my information goes, even the breach has not been completely repaired as yet and I do not know if the earthwork that is now being undertaken will sufficiently consolidate before the next rains in order to enable the earthwork to resist floods or the pressure of flood water if it goes beyond a particular limit. I would invite the attention of the Hon'ble Minister to these things and expect that he would try to fit the immediate plan to the permanent measures he has in view on the recommendations of the expert committee.

Mr. SANTOSH KUMAR BASU: Sir, there is just one point on which I would like to address the Hon'ble Minister. When travelling by the East Indian Railway about a month ago, I had an opportunity to discuss the matter with a certain gentleman who has obtained the contract for earthwork in that locality. He is a member of the Ministerialist Party and he is a man in whose word I have every confidence. The information which was given to me by him was of a somewhat alarming character. He said that there was extreme shortage of labour for the work that had been entrusted to him. Where 1,000 labourers were required, they could get only 200. If the work proceeded at that pace, there was considerable doubt as to whether

sufficient headway could be made before the rains set in. That is an alarming state of affairs, and I thought that I should take the first opportunity to bring this matter to the notice of the Hon'ble Minister, so that he may vouchsafe some reply on the point to this House.

The Hon'ble Mr. BARADA PRASANNA PAIN: Sir, that is absolutely incorrect. As a matter of fact, 20,000 men are at work on the embankment. We want about 25,000 men and we have got near 20,000 men. The work is going on satisfactorily and the reports that are coming in indicate that the work has everywhere advanced.

25—General Administration—General Administration.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 6,35,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "25—General Administration" during the current year.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 6,35,000 for expenditure under the head "25—General Administration" during the current year be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this to raise a discussion about the urgency of grants for enabling union boards to pay dearness allowances to chaukidars dring the emergency.

Sir, I need hardly add any word to the motion, because it is self-explanatory. This is a class of public servants working in the villages who are now being neglected. There is a small amount provided in the budget which is meant mostly for rewards for special type of work done and I presume that this is due to something other than the general increment or dearness allowance that everyone wants in the present emergency. I crave the Hon'ble Minister's attention to the necessity of providing better emoluments to the chaukidary staff. If the Chaukidari Committee's recommendations were adopted, probably Government's attention would have been invited to this. At present they are a charge on union boards, but the union boards are not in a position to finance. Therefore, I submit, Sir, that there is a case made out for Government paying some dearness allowance out of the public revenue.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Sir, on behalf of the Hon'ble Chief Minister I would first like to make it clear that out of Rs. 6,35,000 passed by way of supplementary grant a sum of Rs. 2,61,920 is asked on account of excess grant of bonus at Rs. 1-8 per head per month to daffadars and chaukidars in consideration of heavy calls on their services in the districts of Chittagong, Noakhali, Tippera, Midnapore and the Sadar and Baraset subdivisions in the district of 24-Parganas, where military and other emergency operations are in progress. The sums have been allotted as follows: Chittagong Rs. 52,647; Tippera Rs. 19,946; Noakhali Rs. 46,515; Midnapore Rs. 97,884; and 24-Parganas Rs. 44,928.

So far as the point mentioned by Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal regarding payment of dearness allowance to chaukidars is concerned, Government recognise that these chaukidars are poorly paid and therefore they should be paid some allowance. The number of chaukidars in the province actually stand against any suggestion for grant of dearness allowance, but Government have under

consideration a proposal to grant a dearness allowance of Re. 1 per head per month to daffadars and chaukidars (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Thank you.) and this would cost the provincial exchequer a sum of Rs. 9 lakhs because in Bengal there are about 74,485 daffadars and chaukidars and if a sum of Re. 1 is granted to each of them it would mean an expenditure of Rs. 74,485 per month, i.e., Rs. 9 lakhs per year. Government have this proposal under consideration.

27—Administration of Justice.

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 4,47,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "27—Administration of Justice" during the current year.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 4,47,000 for expenditure under the head "27—Administration of Justice" during the current year be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this in order to raise a discussion about wastefulness and irresponsibility in the engagement of lawyers for the Crown as revealed in connection with several cases including Pollard case and Security Prisoners' *Habeas Corpus* applications.

Sir, I have taken only two instances. At this late hour in the evening, I do not want to detain the House long, but I would like to know from the Hon'ble Minister in charge and, if possible, from the Hon'ble Chief Minister himself if Government have been well advised to undertake large expenditure on certain cases where obviously Government are making a mistake. There are cases and cases. I admit, Sir, that on certain occasions Government may have to engage lawyers, but it is a pure question of particular individuals who have been charged with some specific offences and there have been cases pending against them in different courts with regard to whose cases we have objections. If Government have to pay to one side in certain cases that is surely according most unfair treatment to the other side.

Let us take the Pollard case. Mr. R. C. Pollard—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That case was discussed threadbare I think.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: No, Sir. In Mr. Pollard's case lawyers are even now being paid. Mr. Pollard is accused in a case. Sir, I am not going into the merits of the case. The case was first tried at Murshidabad. The Hon'ble High Court thought it wise to have it transferred to Alipore. The prosecution, i.e., the complainant had to bring all his witnesses and the complainant has to come day in and day out to Alipore. Mr. Pollard has not to appear personally, because the Court granted him the freedom to be represented by a pleader. He is represented by a Crown pleader for which Government is paying everything even when Mr. Pollard is an accused in a case. This is the kind of thing which we would like the Chief Minister and the Minister in charge to carefully examine.

Similarly in other cases, security prisoners' cases, we notice that Government had engaged certain lawyers in the beginning and obviously they have got different categories of lawyers, but when the case went on and proceeded some distance, they engaged other lawyers and they had to spend more and more money. Government should make up their mind as to whom they

would pay. After all, public funds are limited and during this emergency when large demands are made on the Public Exchequer Government should exercise better discretion in paying out money to lawyers for certain cases of this character.

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: I do not think any reply is necessary. I know that all these things are done simply by Government and Government is the only arbitrator in a matter like this. When Government is convinced that a case requires the particular services of any eminent lawyer, the Government must employ him for the satisfaction of the court as well. I know I have had to appoint some lawyers even for defence. Then, I had to send an eminent lawyer to Delhi to defend cases that were pending in the Federal Court. We have been doing our duty conscientiously both for the prosecution as well as for the defence.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: There you are bound under the law because you have detained these prisoners.

The Hon'ble Nawab MUSHARRUFF HOSSAIN, Khan Bahadur: I know when I appointed a man from the Calcutta High Court I had to pay him a sum which I would not have to pay had I appointed a man at Delhi. When I have given this facility to the defence I cannot deny the same for the prosecution as well. There one must be fair. When we send our lawyers from Calcutta we were convinced that the case was of such a nature that particular attention must be given to it. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Am I to understand that in the Pollard case also you paid for the lawyers for the prosecution?) I have done justice to both the prosecution and the defence. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: In which case?) I have nothing more to add.

28—Jails and Convict Settlements.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 78,17,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" during the current year.

Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned at 7-45 p.m. till 3-30 p.m. on Tuesday, the 7th March, 1944, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

Proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly House, Calcutta, on Tuesday, the 7th March, 1944, at 3-30 p.m.

PRESENT:

Mr. Speaker (the Hon'ble Mr. SYED NAUSHER ALI) in the Chair, 13 Hon'ble Ministers and 192 members.

Oath or Affirmation of Allegiance.

The following person made an oath or affirmation of his allegiance to the Crown:—

Mr. R. A. H. Stevenson representing the Indian Tea Association Constituency.

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Number of cases decided and persons convicted by Special Courts Ordinance.

*150. **Babu NAGENDRA NATH SEN:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Home Department be pleased to state—

(a) the total number of cases decided by the Special Courts under Ordinance No. II of 1942 in Bengal up to the 31st May, 1943;

(b) the total number of persons convicted by such courts up to the 31st May, 1943;

(c) whether the District Magistrate of Khulna was petitioned on behalf of Mr. Hem Chandra Sen, a prisoner in the Khulna Jail tried under the said Ordinance No. II of 1942, and sentenced on the 29th March, 1943, by the Subdivisional Officer of Khulna, acting as a Special Magistrate;

(d) if so, what action has been taken on that petition;

(e) whether the Superintendent and Legal Remembrancer were approached with a petition from the said petitioner with reference to his conviction and sentence;

(f) if so, with what result;

(g) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the judgment of the Special Bench of the Hon'ble High Court in the case commonly known as the Jessore Constables case decided under the Ordinance No. II of 1942 and to the judgment of the Federal Court on appeal from the judgment of the High Court; and

(h) whether Government intend to give effect to the judgment of the Hon'ble High Court and the Federal Court?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI (on behalf of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin): (*a*) 2,162.

(*b*) 3,313.

(*c*), (*e*) and (*g*) Yes.

(*d*) Consequent upon the adjournment by High Court of Habeas Corpus petition cases, it was decided not to take any action in respect of convicted persons till the decision of the Federal Court was known.

(*f*) The prisoner was informed through the Superintendent of Khulna Jail that the remedy was by way of appeal as provided by the Special Criminal Courts (Repeal) Ordinance, 1943 (Ordinance No. XIX of 1943).

(*h*) Sentences by Special Criminal Courts having been validated by Ordinance No. XIX of 1943, Government do not contemplate release of these prisoners unless their sentences are set aside on appeal. Superintendents of Jails in Bengal have, however, been asked to inform all persons sentenced under Ordinance II of 1942 of the right of appeal as provided by Ordinance XIX of 1943.

Mr. SANSANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether similar information was given to non-official visitors of jails?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: I am afraid, not to non-official visitors of jails?

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government were satisfied that the Superintendents have sent the information to each of the three thousand odd prisoners lodged in different jails?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Yes.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: How has the Government been satisfied that the information has been sent?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Because Government have information that instructions have been received by all the Superintendents and that they have in their turn duly carried out the instructions given to them.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Are we to understand that these Superintendents have written back to Government saying that they have complied with the instructions?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: The Superintendents have duly acknowledged receipt of Government instructions and Government have full confidence in their officers that they will see that Government instructions have been carried out.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government have asked for a report from the Superintendents and whether the present answer is based on any such report?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: It is not necessary to ask for a report whether any instruction issued has been complied with. In view of the fact that Government have issued a circular instruction it is taken for granted that the instructions have been carried out.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware as to whether any prisoner has complained that he has not received this information?

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: No complaint has been received so far from any prisoner.

Purchase and distribution of rice in Rangpur district.

***151. Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR:** Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Civil Supplies Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) the quantity of rice and paddy purchased on Government account in 1943 within the district of Rangpur;

(*b*) what quantity of said materials was imported in that period from outside;

(*c*) what quantity was sold to—

(*i*) Government servants,

(*ii*) Cheap Grain Stores,

(*iii*) Gruel Kitchens out of the said stock;

(*d*) what quantity was spent for free distribution;

(*e*) what was the stock at hand on the 30th November, 1943; and

(*f*) what quantity was exported outside the district in 1943?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD (on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy): A statement is laid on the Table of the House

Statement referred to in reply to starred question No. 151.

	Rice.			Paddy.		
	Md.	sr.	ch.	Md.	sr.	ch.
(*a*) Quantity of rice and paddy purchased on Government account in 1943 within the district of Rangpur.	55,908	34	9	29,367	36	11
(*b*) Quantities imported in that period from outside on Government account.	23,278	25	0	8,720	0	0
(*c*) Quantities sold to—						
(*i*) Government servants	5,964	37	11	....		
(*ii*) Cheap Grain Stores	25,317	32	15	7,711	0	0
(*iii*) Gruel Kitchens out of the stock in column (*a*).	12,420	30	8	....		
(*d*) Quantity spent on free distribution .	5,596	34	13	17,628	2	0
(*e*) Stock in hand on the 30th November, 1943 ..	22,861	3	10	10,100	34	11
(*f*) Quantity exported outside the district in 1943 ex-Government stocks.	7,027	0	0	2,648	0	0

Quality of rice supplied to Relief Centres in Bengal.

***152. Mr. HEM CHANDRA NASKAR:** (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Civil Supplies Department be pleased to state the quality of rice supplied to different Relief Centres in this Province?

(*b*) Is it a fact that (*i*) rice supplied to these centres was rotten, and (*ii*) people using it have been attacked with cholera, dysentery and other diseases?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD (on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy): (*a*) Mostly rice of poor qualities supplied by other Provinces.

(*b*)(*i*) While the quality was not always very satisfactory, it can, by no means, be described as rotten or unfit for human consumption.

(*ii*) No.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Government took any steps to ascertain the causes of widespread appearance of swollen legs and dysentery among the poor people who attended relief kitchens and consumed bad quality of rice?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Government have not got any such information from the local authorities.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: Will the Government be pleased to consider the desirability of ascertaining now if such things happen as a result of consuming the bad quality of rice?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Unless the local authorities report on the basis of medical report that it was due to consuming bad quality of rice, Government is not willing to take any action.

SJ. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state from what province or provinces this bad quality of rice was imported into Bengal?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Generally from Orissa and Bihar.

SJ. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if any complaint was made to the Governments of respective provinces concerned about the bad quality of rice supplied by them?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Yes, Sir, necessary steps have been taken and the respective Provincial Governments have been informed.

Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: With reference to the answer just given to the question of Khan Bahadur Abdul Wahab Khan, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if he ever cared to visit such relief centres to see the condition of the poor people?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: We have visited a number of centres.

Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he himself marked any man with swollen feet or legs or having other diseases lying there?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: It may be said that it was not due to their attending the gruel kitchens and consuming the bad quality of rice.

Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: Sir, my question has not been answered. My question is, whether he found any such cases.

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Yes, but that might be due to other causes.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if any member of the Government party or any Parliamentary Secretary ever noticed swollen legs and tried to ascertain the causes by any means whatsoever?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: No such cases have been brought to our notice. Although we visited many relief kitchens we have not come across any such cases.

Mr. A. F. STARK: Has the Hon'ble Minister lodged any claim for rebate for bad quality of rice supplied to this province?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Yes, Government have written to the respective Provincial Governments for refund of money for giving rice of bad quality.

Mr. ABDUL LATIF BISWAS: In view of the prevalence of opinion that due to the very bad quality of rice there have been epidemic diseases, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether he considers the desirability of making any enquiry as to the causes of these epidemics?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: This concerns the Medical and Public Health Departments which, if moved, might look into it.

Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the quantity of bad quality of rice imported from other provinces?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: This I cannot say offhand and moreover the quantity of rice that was imported and given to gruel kitchens have already been consumed.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the amount of bad quality of rice imported into Bengal by Messrs. Ispahani & Co.?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: That I cannot say offhand.

Mr. ABDUL LATIF BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether before the distribution of the rice which came from other provinces any inspection was made whether the rice was fit for consumption?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: It was not possible at that time because the consignments came in such congestion that it was not possible to take delivery of all the consignments after assorting them and take them in proper places.

Khan Bahadur Shah ABDUR RAUF: When the bad quality of rice was brought to the notice of Government, did Government ever take care to have the rice examined by the Public Health Department?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: No. Sir, Government have assorted the rice and graded the quality. They have taken steps and have informed the Governments which supplied rice of bad quality to refund the money.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if Government propose to take any steps for getting refund of the amount for the supply of bad rice?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Yes, Government have already taken steps.

Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether full payment has already been made to those provinces?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Yes.

Khan Bahadur Haji BADI AHMED CHOWDHURY: আমি জিজ্ঞাসা করতে চাই এই অখাদ্য চাল খেয়ে আমাদের যখন অসুখ হচ্ছে তখন আমরা বাইরে থেকে আমাদের খাবার আনতে পারি কি ?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: That question does not arise.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: With reference to answer (*a*) will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state what has happened to the rice of poor quality purchased within the province?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: This is with regard to the bad quality of rice that came from other provinces.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, the question was, what quality of rice was supplied to different relief centres in the province and the answer is, mostly rice of poor qualities supplied by other provinces. My question is what has happened to that quantity or amount of poor quality of rice purchased within the province.

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: No bad quality of rice was purchased by Government within the province.

Khan Bahadur Shah ABDUR RAUF: Is it not a fact that the rice supplied to the consumers was full of husks and stones?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: I think it does not arise out of this question.

Mr. ABDUL LATIF BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any quantity of rice purchased within the province was bad and rotten?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: No.

Mr. ABDUL LATIF BISWAS: In view of the answer (*a*)—mostly rice of poor qualities supplied by other provinces, we suggest that there was some portion of the rotten rice which was purchased in this province. Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state from which districts or from what source this rice of bad quality came from?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: I have already said, from other provinces.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state where the rice of good quality has gone?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: It has been distributed to gruel kitchens, through cheap grain shops and as free doles.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government have written to those provinces asking for compensation for the injury to the manhood of this province caused by this poor quality of rice?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Of course, reference has been made for the refund of money for the supply of rice of bad quality.

Mr. ABDUL LATIF BISWAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether Government have got any answer from those provinces as regards the refund of money?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: I cannot say offhand. Negotiations are going on.

Mr. A. M. ABDUL HAMID: With reference to answer (*b*) (*i*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any step was taken to have that poor quality of rice examined by the Public Health Department or by other chemical or other means?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: I think this question does not concern this department. Of course, if rice of bad quality came, Government might look into the matter, but such bad quality of rice has not come before Government.

Mr. A. M. ABDUL HAMID: With reference to answer (*b*) (*i*) that it can, by no means, be described as rotten or unfit for human consumption, it may be an individual judgment. Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether that opinion of his was based on any chemical examination?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: No, Sir.

Mr. A. M. ABDUL HAMID: Then, Sir, it is the opinion of a layman only.

Mr. SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Maulvi Md. ISRAIL: In view of the answer just now given, will the Hon'ble Minister consider the desirability of getting this rice examined either by medical means or by chemical means?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Most of this rice has already been consumed. The small quantity that is now in hand has been assorted and Government do not think it necessary to make any examination.

Maulvi Md. ISRAIL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether in future Government will appoint or take necessary steps to get examined all rice and other foodstuffs which may be unsuitable for human consumption without giving their own verdict without any examination whatsoever?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Steps have already been taken for assorting the rice that is coming from outside the province.

Khan Bahadur Shah ABDUR RAUF: Is it a fact that the Government rice which is rotting at Gaibandha has been sent to Katabari refugees' camp for consumption by the poor refugees?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: I do not think this question arises out of this. However, I have no information.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: With reference to answer (*b*) (*ii*), will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the source of his information that there was no case of cholera, dysentery and other diseases in the camp?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Because the Public Health Department or the Civil Surgeon of the locality in which gruel kitchens were situated have not reported any such case.

Khan Bahadur ABDUL WAHAB KHAN: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that in each and every gruel kitchen camp there are a large number of swollen leg patients available and visible and any Minister or any Parliamentary Secretary must have noticed this?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not a question that requires a reply.

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: In view of the answer given by Government that there was no disease like cholera and dysentery by using this rotten rice, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state by what process then Government came to know that the rice supplied by other provinces was rotten if it did not produce any bad effect on the consumer?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: We have received such information from our officers.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister consider the desirability of enquiring as to which of their agents or chief agents are responsible for importing this bad and uneatable rice?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: The rice was so mixed up that it was not an easy matter just to find out which of their agents brought this rice.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(Answers to which were laid on the table)

District Board roads taken over by military.

65. Khan Bahadur JASIMUDDIN AHMED: Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Communications and Works Department be pleased to state whether—

(*a*) any District Board road or roads have been taken over by the military authorities without notice;

(*b*) such road or roads have been improved through the agency of the Communications and Works Department; and

(*c*) these have been left unattended subsequently?

MINISTER in charge of the COMMUNICATIONS and WORKS DEPARTMENT (the Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prasanna Pain): The information asked for is such as cannot be disclosed for military reasons

Alleged forcible seizure by Subdivisional Officer of Balurghat of thousands of maunds of paddy belonging to an agriculturist.

66. Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: (*a*) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Civil Supplies Department be pleased to state whether—

(*i*) any report was received by the District Magistrate of Dinajpur regarding forcible seizure and distribution of some thousands of maunds of paddy belonging to an agriculturist in village Binsira, in Balurghat subdivision, by the Subdivisional Officer, some time in May last; and

(*ii*) it is a fact that the Subdivisional Officer marched at the head of about one thousand people and raided the house of the said agriculturist?

(*b*) If the answer to (*a*) is in the affirmative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state—

(*i*) what action have Government taken in the matter; and

(*ii*) if no action has yet been taken, what action do they propose to take therein?

Minister in charge of the Civil Supplies Department (the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy): (*a*) (*i*) A miscellaneous petition containing such allegations was filed before the District Magistrate, Dinajpur; the allegations could not, however, be substantiated.

(*ii*) No.

(*b*) Government do not propose to take any action in the matter as enquiries made by the District Magistrate go to show that the allegations are untrue.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us if the petitioner was given an opportunity to adduce evidence before the District Magistrate in order to substantiate his case? If so, when?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: The District Magistrate made an enquiry into the complaint made. The petition did not contain the names of the persons against whom complaints were made nor were there any names of witnesses. After enquiry it was found that the allegations were untrue.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Sir, the allegation was made against the Subdivisional Officer. Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us whether the petition did not contain the name of the Subdivisional Officer?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: The petition contained only one name, viz., the name of the petitioner and no names of those who were accused or who were witnesses were given.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: If you will look into the question, you will find that the allegation was made against the Subdivisional Officer and therefore no name is necessary. So certainly the petition contained allegations against the Subdivisional Officer.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your question, Mr. Datta?

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: My question is in view of the fact that the allegation was made against the Subdivisional Officer is the Hon'ble Minister aware that no name is necessary?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: The District Magistrate on enquiry found that the allegations were untrue.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to tell us if there was no name against whom complaints were made, what was the enquiry about?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: The enquiry was with regard to the false allegation of looting.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the enquiry was made in the presence of the petitioner?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Yes, in presence of the petitioner and he was also examined.

Mr. SHAHEDALI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether on the alleged day the Subdivisional Officer went to a particular agriculturist?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Yes. The Subdivisional Officer at the request of the gentleman from whose house paddy was distributed went after two other officers were deputed, to see that the distribution was made properly.

Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state how many thousands of maunds of paddy were possessed by this agriculturist?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: I cannot say off-hand. So far as I can remember possibly the agriculturist had some 300 maunds of paddy or something like that over and above his own requirements.

Mr. A. F. STARK: Is it a fact that the agriculturist was a hoarder?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Yes.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state who ordered this distribution to be made?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: The fact is that this agriculturist every year used to distribute paddy on loan to the *adiars* and the poorer tenants. This time when the price of rice was rising high, Government issued a notice under section 75A of the Defence of India Rules, so that the stock might not be clandestinely dissipated and at the request of this agriculturist the Subdivisional Officer deputed two officers to see that the distribution was made peacefully and on the execution of proper bonds.

Srijut NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether any money was given to this *aratdar* for the paddy taken from his *gola*?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: He is not an *aratdar*.

Khan Bahadur Shah ABDUR RAUF: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether paddy was distributed gratuitously or was it distributed on loan?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: No, it was on loan.

Khan Bahadur Shah ABDUR RAUF: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether loan has been realised or not?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: I cannot say that off-hand. Bonds have been executed for that loan.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state whether the enquiry referred to in answer (*b*) was an executive enquiry or a judicial enquiry?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Of course, I cannot say that off-hand, but the report is that an enquiry was made.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to consider the desirability of having a judicial enquiry made into the matter?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: There is no necessity.

Dr. ABDUL MOTALEB MALIK: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state if it is a fact that due to scarcity of paddy the villagers nearby approached the Executive Officer to help them in the matter of taking rice from this agriculturist?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Every year this agriculturist used to give paddy on loan to the *adiars* and poorer tenants. This time also he

agreed to give them loan after notice was served upon him and he himself approached the Subdivisional Officer, so that the distribution might be made in the presence of the officers and he could get back this paddy.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state the number of persons among whom this alleged distribution was made?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: I cannot say that off-hand.

Mr. ASHUTOSH LAHIRI: Is it a fact that the Commissioner of the Rajshahi Division paid a visit to the spot and made an enquiry into the matter?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: I have no information.

Mr. NISHITHA NATH KUNDU: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to state who informed these persons among whom the paddy was distributed to come on that particular date?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: Rice was distributed on two days. The agriculturist himself fixed up two dates and the poor people got the information from him.

Point of personal explanation.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of personal explanation, Sir. I owe you and the House an apology and explanation for certain observations that I made yesterday on which some heat was created. And before proceeding with the facts of the case which I have now fully collected I offer my unqualified apology to the House for having not been yesterday in a position to place the exact and correct state of affairs. The facts are as follows The Hon'ble Mr. Premhari Barma (uproar). The facts are as follows. The Hon'ble Mr. Prem Hari Barma and the Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath Mondal travelled to Kushtia from Calcutta by the 23-Up on 4th March, 1944, i.e., on Saturday last to attend the Scheduled Caste Conference there.

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: On a point of privilege, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order. Dr Sanyal, do you want to say anything by way of personal explanation and apology?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Yes.

Khan Bahadur Shah ABDUR RAUF: Is it necessary for the personal explanation to be given in such detail?

(Interruption.)

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The Hon'ble Mr. Prem Hari Barma travelled on requisition No. 33 for one first class full compartment and 4 servants for which 8 first class tickets were to be paid for by the Government of Bengal.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: How does all this arise on a point of apology and personal explanation?

Maulvi MUHAMMED ISRAIL: On a point of order, Sir.

(Interruption.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The Hon'ble Mr. J. N. Mondal travelled on Requisition No. 19.

(Interruption.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I was given to understand by Mr. Speaker that Dr. Sanyal would make a statement explaining the position and that he had got the consent of both the Speaker and the Hon'ble the Leader of the House. I have just consulted the Hon'ble Leader of the House on this matter and he has also agreed that Dr. Sanyal will rise to explain these things by way of personal explanation. I am just giving him this latitude. I shall hear him and shall stop him if he is irrelevant.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The Hon'ble Mr. Mondal also travelled on requisition from Calcutta to Kushtia——

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Is there a guarantee that the honourable member will not have to offer another apology for any wrong statement?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: If there is any wrong statement I shall not hesitate to apologise

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I shall see whether he will have to offer another apology.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: The Hon'ble Mr. Mondal travelled in a first class coupe on a requisition with 8 servants for which 4 first class fares and 8 servants fares were paid The Hon'ble Mr. Barma's compartment was found to have 2 more unauthorised persons travelling and at Ranaghat two S.W.W. crewmen realised from them—the receipt mentions the name of the Hon'ble Mr. Barma—Rs. 24-10, Rs. 12-5 from each traveller, Rs. 6-2-6 for first class fares and penalty Rs 6-2-6 each. I am sorry that there was any insinuation made about the Hon'ble Mr. Mondal, who although travelling on the same train, did not travel second class as I mentioned yesterday.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: I think the honourable member should apologise both to the Hon'ble Mr. Barma and the Hon'ble Mr. Mondal for the insinuation he made; otherwise the whole of the explanation and that part of the proceedings will have to be expunged from the record. That is what I would submit to you, Sir When he made certain statements and insinuations against honourable members on this side of the House it was immediately protested and objected to. The allegation was that the statement was false. It has been proved by his own statement that his statements were absolutely false. He has not apologised to the Hon'ble Mr. Barma or to the Hon'ble Mr. Mondal. I think that he should tender an apology to both the Hon'ble Ministers, otherwise the statements that he made yesterday and today should, I submit, be expunged.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, have you anything to say?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I am surprised that the Leader of the House takes up such an attitude. In my opening statement itself I started by saying "I offer an unqualified apology both to the House and to the Hon'ble Ministers concerned." In fact, you will notice, Sir, that yesterday's

statement, if it is ever gone into carefully, will show that my complaint has been against the Government of India directly and not against the Hon'ble Ministers.

The Hon'ble Mr. JOGENDRA NATH MONDAL: Sir,——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I hope you will not rise on a point of order. The Hon'ble Leader of the House has expressed very clearly your point of view.

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: On a point of privilege, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order. No point of privilege now. I have to finish this long business. You belong to the Government party and you will, I hope, realise the importance of this.

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: May I be permitted to draw your attention to this fact?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is it on a new point of order?

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: My point is not about what Dr. Sanyal said yesterday. My point is about the publication of the report of yesterday's proceedings in the newspapers. Dr. Sanyal made certain statements insinuating upon the conduct of honourable members on this side of the House. In reply to that I submitted before you that you would be pleased to expunge those statements from the proceedings of the House. I also submitted that if any man gave any information, however groundless or baseless it might be—he might be insinuating—and if that particular piece of information was published then his object was served. I have information and it was rumoured strongly that Dr. Sanyal used to make *tadbir* for traders and merchants by taking money——

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: It is an absolutely malicious lie.

Mr. ABDULLA-AL MAHMOOD: My point is, Sir, that out of the two points I made only one has been published in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

(Interruption.)

I said that Dr. Sanyal used to draw travelling allowance from his constituency although he was permanently residing in Calcutta. That was published. As regards the rumour that is afloat outside and about which I stated in this House, that has not been published——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order. You are making a speech. I am afraid the matter has ended. As regards the publication of these matters in the newspapers I gave my decision yesterday. You are an experienced parliamentarian and you should know my position.

(Interruption.)

Well, I have no control whatsoever as to what will or will not be published in the newspapers outside this House, and then I have not even seen today what has been published in the newspapers. Therefore I am not in a position to take any decision on the matter. I will go through that paper. But can you suggest whether I have got power to deal with the Press?

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Yes, Sir, you have got that power.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You better give me the paper: I will examine the statement that has been published in the Press, and I will see

later if I have got anything to do in the matter. But I will not allow any more discussion on this matter.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir. Sir, I shall not ask you to do anything which is not in accordance with the rules. I am only requesting you, unlike the request from the other side, not to expunge anything from the proceedings, because I stand on everything that I have stated in the House.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: My point of order is this: I submit that all these insinuations and allegations against me are absolutely false and knowingly false, and I hope and trust this will be placed on record by your office.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Sir, may I crave the indulgence of appealing to you and through you to the whole House that when Dr. Sanyal made an allegation yesterday he was generous and courteous enough to make amends today straight and simple and Mr Abdulla-Al Mahmood who is not merely a member of the House but also a responsible functionary of the Government, has raised a point of order and of privilege and reiterated mean allegations against one of the honourable members. May we expect, Sir, that the honourable member Mr Abdulla-Al Mahmood will have the goodness and greatness to withdraw the remarks he has made and for which he has no evidence in his possession Sir, if this is the way in which the level of the controversy comes down in the proceedings, it will violate the decorum and decency of the House.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr Sanyal, you have finished, and I think it is up to Mr Abdulla-Al Mahmood whether to withdraw or not.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, you ought to insist upon the honourable member to withdraw his statement in which he has made mean allegations. He has himself stated that on rumours he has made those allegations. If the honourable member will so demean himself as to be guided by rumours——

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Sanyal, I have promised to look into the paper: I will see what has been published there and I will also see from the proceedings what observation has been made by Mr. Abdulla-Al Mahmood, and then I will decide the matter.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, so far as I am concerned, I do not want any withdrawal.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Sir, the members of the Coalition Party are unable to quote facts and figures just as are being supplied by the Opposition, and so they have now entered into a mean conspiracy for pulling down the able members of the Opposition.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is a matter of opinion.

Mr. A. M. A. ZAMAN: On a point of order, Sir. Mr. Deputy Speakr, আমি জানতে চাচ্ছি আপনার through দিয়ে—Ministerরা দুহাজার টাকা করে মাইনে পান কিনা, গভর্ণমেন্টের তহবিল হইতে টাকা রেল ভাড়ার দরুণ খরচ কোরে যে মিটিংএ

যাচ্ছিলেন, সেটা Public Meeting কিনা এবং তাদের সঙ্গে দলের অন্যান্য লোকদের নিয়ে যাচ্ছিলেন কিনা,—এবং নিয়ে গেলে সেটা নেওয়া উচিত কিনা (Cries of no more, no more, shut up, etc., were shouted from the Government Benches).

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is no point of order.

Mr. ABDUR RAHMAN SIDDIQI: On a point of order, Sir. I should like to know if the word "lie" used by the honourable member for the Municipality of Murshidabad and the word "mean" used by his cousin the other Mr. Sanyal, are to be allowed.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have always decried the use of this sort expressions. These are absolutely unparliamentary and I hope the members will not use them.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, a lie will always remain a lie.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Unlike the member of the other side I am prepared to withdraw. But has he the courage and greatness to withdraw the remarks made by him?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is not always fair that I should ask for expressions to be expunged, and it is usually the practice that even in the House of Commons unparliamentary expressions are not expunged.

Yes, Mr. Atul Chandra Sen.

Supplementary Estimates for 1943-44.

DEMAND FOR GRANTS.

"28—Jails and Convict Settlements."

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Sir, I propose to move Nos. 32 and 34 together, and I hope you will be pleased to give me double the time.

Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 78,17,000 for expenditure under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" during the current year, be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of my motion is to raise a discussion about the bad diet supplied to prisoners and overcrowding of jails far beyond their capacities.

Sir, I also beg to move that the demand of Rs. 78,17,000 for expenditure under the head "8—Jails and Convict Settlements" during the current year, be reduced by Rs. 100. The object of this motion is to raise a discussion about the inadequacy in the provision for proper amenities to prisoners in jails including security prisoners regarding food, clothing, etc., and insufficiency of provisions regarding sanitary arrangements and congestion in jails.

Sir, speaking about the diet supplied to ordinary prisoners I am reminded of the days when about 22 years ago I was a prisoner in the Dacca Central Jail. When I entered the jail, the special treatment had not been introduced and for over two months I had been given food given to ordinary prisoners. I yet remember the rich and splendid menu to which I was treated for about 60 days, especially I cannot forget the *lopsy*, that is Mr. Suhrawardy's gruel food, without *dal*, and the curious decoction called a vegetable curry by courtesy, prepared by dried and rotten leaves boiled together. One might think that in the course of the last 22 years that state of affairs has changed.

But, no. As a non-official visitor of the Dacca Central Jail I have observed that the same state of affairs prevails even today. Once I went to the kitchen and detected the same dried and rotten leaves boiled together in the vegetable "witch's" cauldron. I remarked that the food was uneatable, and came away. When I next went to visit the jail, I found that the Superintendent, a European gentleman, remarked in the counter-remarks column, "Well, food is not bad and I personally tasted it myself and found it O.K." Then I wrote the remarks: "My friend the Superintendent has personally tasted the food and found it O.K. but I would not ever give it to my cows to eat. This food is not worthy of human consumption." Now, this is the state of affairs in a first class jail like the Dacca Central Jail. What is true of Dacca is true of other jails in Bengal. It is not merely that unfortunate prisoners in jails do not get proper food in jails but they are also huddled up together like cattle. Recently in Contai sub-jail more than 600 people were huddled together in small barracks which had not the capacity to accommodate 200 people. This is horrible. Then, again, Sir, there is insufficient water-supply in the Dacca Central Jail. Many prisoners complained to me that in hot and sultry nights they cannot have even a drop of drinking water to drink. I enquired and I found that their grievance was genuine.

Now, Sir, coming from the ordinary prisoners to the security prisoners, I shall say only a few words. These people, the security prisoners have complained about bad food, about insufficient clothing, about want of proper amenities and all that. They do not get sufficient clothing. In winter they do not receive sufficient warm clothing and whatever they get they get after the winter is over, after the necessity is gone. Sir, I will not dilate on those things. Their grievances, their complaints are various and many.

I will today direct attention to one fact which shows to what extent this Government can be callous with regard to the suffering of these security prisoners. I shall speak of facilities of medical treatment. Sir, I have seen cases in which security prisoners suffering from very serious diseases requiring proper treatment do not get necessary facilities. I will give you a few instances. There is Babu Kedareswar Sen Gupta, a security prisoner, who has for about the last 20 years of his life been suffering from intestinal tuberculosis. As a matter of fact when he was arrested he had to be carried from home on a stretcher. I told Sir Nazimuddin why he arrested this man who is more dead than alive. He replied "His brain is active though physically he is weak. He must be detained." He has been detained. He was suffering badly. Recently he was removed to the Presidency Jail. Doctors in attendance prescribed certain medicines and diets but the Government said, "No, the cost of this medicine and diet cannot be covered by the scheduled rate allowed to a security prisoner." Can there be anything more barbarous, more inhuman, more cruel in treatment of people who have been detained in jail, who have been detained behind prison bars, who have been deprived of liberty and freedom?

Then, Sir, there is another case—Chittaranjan Guha. This poor young man has been suffering from suspected T.B., insomnia and chronic colitis. There is no treatment.

Among the lady prisoners I would mention two or three cases. There is one case of Mrs. Labanyaprava Das Gupta. Mrs. Das Gupta is the daughter-in-law of a gentleman who was a Rai Bahadur and Additional Magistrate

when living. She is now in the Midnapore Jail. She is suffering from chronic gastric ulcer. There is no treatment.

There is again Miss Saila Sen. She is suffering from..... She is also in.....Jail. No treatment.

Then again there is Mrs. Leela Roy, that distinguished political worker. She is in jail. She is suffering from loss of weight and confirmed anæmia. No treatment.

Now, Sir, the question arises that there are many cases some of which have come to our notice—and I have no time to mention them—and there are other cases which have not come to our notice. Sir, in order to consider the question we have to look at it from the proper perspective. Who are these people, these security prisoners? They are not criminals, they are not convicts. They come from the very cream of society. They are men with ideals; they love their country. Their only fault is that they are patriotic and patriotism is a sin in this unhappy land of ours. I say, Sir, with all the emphasis at my command, when our Governors, Ministers, their Secretaries, their Parliamentary Secretaries, Commissioners of Police, Intelligence Branch men, all the rest will be dead and relegated to the past, scrap of things, dead and gone, these people will be remembered as men who have a mission in their life. This, Sir, I repeat, they have a mission in their life. They will make the world better for us; they will make India better for us; that is their Divine Mission that Providence has ordained for them. Now, Sir, if the Government prove to be callous in their treatment to them the only thing we can say is this, that the Government can do that but Government will go down in history as people who have destroyed this salt of the earth, they will go down in the history who have killed true nationalism and patriotism that are necessary for the upbuilding of this unhappy land of ours, and when they die the poet of the future will sing on them like the English Poets "Thou shouldst be living at this hour"—referring to security prisoners "You should be living at this hour"—"the country hath need of thee."

Sir, our grievance against the Government is this that these people, as I have already said, are not criminals, are not convicts. They have been deprived of a most elementary right to which a citizen is entitled in a civilized state. You are detaining them without trial; therefore it behoves you to give them all the amenities of life, a true human life, a life that gives them food for the body, food for the mind, a life that makes them grow stronger from day to day and when they come out they can devote themselves to the service of the land. The Government by depriving them of this right can be accused of barbarism. I am accusing the Government of barbarism.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 78,17,000 for expenditure under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" during the current year be reduced by Rs. 100. My object is to raise a discussion about the urgency of a proper and independent enquiry into (*a*) allegations of charging higher than controlled prices from security prisoners in the jails, (*b*) working of the Tribunal for reviewing the cases of security prisoners and (*c*) increase in the jail population.

Sir, I would not like to take much time of the House at this stage on these three subjects, for so far as I am aware they are not only self-explanatory but also with regard to each of these the attention of Government had already been drawn from time to time. Sir, with regard to the

allegation that certain jail authorities have been levying higher charges from security prisoners we had invited the attention of the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Civil Supplies at a Conference held in the Writers' Buildings in his room as early as the 17th November 1943. I am not aware, Sir, what has been done thereafter. The Chief Whip of the Government was also personally present at that conference and it was agreed at the conference that the Chief Whip and another senior officer of the Civil Supplies Department, both of whom were present at the place, would enquire into the statement made by myself. I am not aware so far if any investigation has been made and I have come to know that a representation was actually forwarded from the inmates of Dum Dum Central Jail to that effect pointing out that even after the controlled rates were announced and severe steps were threatened against dealers who would exceed the limits mentioned in those Government notices and press communique the jail authorities continued to levy much higher prices. I would like to know whether any action has been taken and if any what action was taken with regard to these allegations, and after the allegations were found to be true—and I believe there is little doubt about the truth of that because vouchers and actual notes on the prices are available in the jail office even now—what action has been taken to bring to book the persons responsible for levying such higher prices.

My second submission, Sir, is with regard to the working of the Tribunal for reviewing the cases of security prisoners, for the functioning of which a sum of money has been provided even in the supplementary estimates. So far as we are aware, there is no evidence of any Tribunal as such functioning and we have been insistently demanding that a suitable machinery should be set up to investigate into the allegations against each security prisoner with full opportunity given to the prisoners themselves about such charges as have been brought against them and after reviewing the cases to expedite their release as quickly and as generously as possible. This morning's newspapers bring us the report that only about 510 security prisoners in Bengal have so far been released during the regime of the present Government. While appreciating the little mercy shown, I submit, Sir, that there are still many gems and jewels of Bengali society lying behind the prison bars. It is up to the present Government to justify their longer detention than would have been felt on their own standard absolutely necessary. More so, Sir, we regret that persons who had been convicted to specified terms of imprisonment should on their release have been clapped into prison again under the Defence of India Rules and converted into security prisoners. This is, to say the least, atrocious. We would like to know if in all such cases the Tribunal actually goes through the papers before the prisoners are again clapped into prison. If not, we would request the Government to send all such suitable cases before the Tribunal first, so that immediately on the expiry of their terms their fate might be determined. Let not Government keep any person in detention more than or longer than what even in the opinion of their own officers is found to be absolutely essential in the interests of the State.

My third submission is with regard to the increase in the jail population. As will be noticed from the supplementary estimates as also from the main budget estimates there has been an increased grant required for our jails

mainly because of two reasons, namely, increase in the allowances on account of food and clothing and increase in the number of prisoners. We submit, Sir, that Government should immediately start an enquiry and find out why there has been such a large increase in the jail population. We understand, Sir, that this increase in the jail population has been nearly by 40 per cent. We would like to request the Government to see whether even in this matter the increase has been mainly due to a deterioration of the economic situation in the country or to any other laches in that department. So far as our impression goes, we feel that there has been a considerable increase in the number of inmates in the jails, because the police do not get their cases ready in time and a large increase in the list of under-trials has been the consequence. The number of under-trials can easily be found from the Jail Register and the number of days these under-trials have been detained is also not very difficult to ascertain. We would submit, Sir, that the provincial revenues would be saved a good deal if arrangements be made to expedite police cases. If, however, the Magistracy is at fault and if it is noticed that District Magistrates and their officers are not in a position to or are not taking sufficient care to expedite disposal of criminal cases, Government should take necessary measures in that connection as well. We know from our experience that petty cases even take a very long time to dispose of. I am not sure whether that is the one potent cause for the detention of a large number of prisoners for a longer time in jails leading to much increased expenditure. We would ask Government to apply their minds to all these three points before they sanction further expenditure.

Khan Bahadur MOHAMMED ALI: Sir, I would like to reply on behalf of the Hon'ble Chief Minister. Mr. Atul Sen in the two cut motions that he has moved has referred to certain points about which, Sir, I shall place some material before the House. The first point that he has mentioned is with regard to diet and clothing of prisoners. Since the assumption of office by the present Ministry, one of the first acts that they have done is to increase the dietary allowance of security prisoners and the increase has been cent. per cent., i.e., a sum of Rs. 1-8 is now sanctioned for each prisoner instead of 12 annas which was the prevailing rate prior to the assumption of office by this Ministry. Now the same thing applies to the other ordinary prisoners because Government have prescribed a scale of diet and to stick to that scale an increased cost has now to be borne by Government.

Now, Sir, with regard to family allowance to security prisoners, I may explain briefly the liberal policy of the present Ministry. There has been a cent. per cent. increase in case of allowances granted before the 1st January, 1943, and 50 per cent. increase in the case of allowances granted between 1st January, 1943, and 1st April, 1943, and in all other cases allowances have been granted liberally on merit subject to the general principle that the allowance of a prisoner does not exceed his own pre-arrest income. But in some cases even this rule has been relaxed on compassionate grounds.

With regard to clothing, Sir, all articles of clothing supplied to security prisoners, wholly or partly at Government cost, are now treated as properties of the prisoners. The prisoners are now allowed to take away the clothings on release and even during their periods of detention their old clothings can be given away to their families or to charity.

Then, Sir, with regard to medical treatment referred to by Mr. Atul Sen, I would like to state that in all hospitals attached to jails facilities exist for giving proper medical aid and assistance. In case outside treatment is necessary, prisoners are transferred to bigger and larger hospitals for treatment. So far as sanitary arrangements are concerned, there are already satisfactory arrangements in almost all the jails in the province.

Dr. Sanyal in his cut motion has raised three issues, first with regard to charging higher prices, secondly, with regard to the constitution of a Tribunal for reviewing cases and thirdly, with regard to the increase in the jail population.

So far as charging higher prices from security prisoners is concerned, it is true that there were instances where security prisoners were charged higher than controlled rates. This was due to the fact that Government built up stocks during non-control and decontrol period and articles were supplied subsequently to security prisoners from such stocks at cost price during control period. But when this matter was brought to the notice of Government, Government immediately issued orders to the effect that articles supplied to security prisoners must be at controlled rates and even if they sustain a loss, the loss should be borne by Government. Now no security prisoner pays a single pice higher than the controlled rate for any article supplied to him.

With regard to Tribunal, I may mention that there is no Tribunal prescribed by law. Under the new Act grounds of detention are to be communicated to the prisoners and the prisoners have a right to represent their cases and the case of each security prisoner has to be reviewed every six months. This is being done by Government. In June or July, 1942, a Tribunal was appointed but following the receipt of the report of the Tribunal, the August disturbances started and the then Ministry in power found it impossible to give effect to the recommendations of the Tribunal.

With regard to the increase in jail population, it is true that after Hijli and Comilla jails have been taken away by the military authorities congestion has increased in jails. Another cause for the increase in jail population is the famine conditions prevailing in the province which led to a lot of minor offences of theft of food and other necessities of life. The measures taken by Government to relieve congestion are: First, well-behaved short-term convicts are released prematurely and secondly, cases of under-trial prisoners are being reviewed and those cases where the District Magistrates and the Superintendents of Police are satisfied that the crimes were connected directly with famine for obtaining food or other necessities of life are being withdrawn and prisoners released.

With these few words, Sir, I oppose all the cut motions moved by honourable members opposite.

30—Ports and pilotage.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Sir, on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja Shahabuddin, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 1,52,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "30—Ports and Pilotage" during the current year.

37—Education—General.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Sir, on the recommendation of *His Excellency the Governor*, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 7,89,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "37—Education—General" during the current year.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 7,89,000 made under the head "37—Education—General" be reduced by Rs. 100. My object is to raise a discussion about the failure of the Government in giving relief to the teachers of the non-Government secondary schools and about the inadequate relief sought to be given to schools whose buildings had been damaged by floods, etc.

Sir, this is a matter which has been placed before the Government times without number, but the regret is that it has not received the attention of the Government which it deserves. The condition of the secondary school teachers is really pitiable. In my own district they have been giving up their profession and many, out of sheer necessity, have been working as military contractors. That is the position. What else could they do in the present condition of the secondary schools? On account of the famine the number of students on the roll has decreased enormously. The pay of the teachers has all along been abnormally low. During these abnormal times and in these days of crisis when the prices of all necessaries of life have increased enormously and the cost of living has gone up 300 per cent. the pay of the teachers has not been at all sufficient to meet the requirements even of a few days in a month. Their pay is much less than that of a constable. That is the position, and the Government want education to be imparted with the help of these poorly paid teachers. The Explanatory memorandum says that the excess in these matters is due to "Special grants sanctioned for the restoration of school buildings damaged by cyclone, the purchase of equipment, books and appliances for such schools and relief to teachers in cyclone-affected areas". The amount under the first two heads relates to direct grants to non-Government schools for boys (non-recurring):—

		Rs.
Buildings grants	...	93,000
Furniture and Equipment grants	...	29,000
Other grants including relief to teachers in cyclone-affected areas	...	51,000

Then, Sir, I beg to submit that in the cyclone-affected areas relief has been given in the shape of a portion of Rs. 51,000 to the Secondary Schools. But no relief has been given to the teachers living in the famine-affected area. In the Chittagong Division I know the conditions of teachers of secondary schools; I have toured in that area and I find that most of the schools are empty. Practically education has stopped in those areas. Does the Government want that education should go on, or does the Government want that it should not go on? During the period of war in other belligerent countries education has not deteriorated, on the other hand it has progressed. In this unhappy country the condition is that education has almost stopped. So, Sir, this is a matter which must engage the attention of the House very

seriously. If they want that education should go on, they should give proper relief to these secondary school teachers. Unless proper relief is given to secondary school teachers I maintain that education will come to a dead stop.

With these words I commend my motion to the acceptance of the House.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 7,89,000 under the head "37—Education—General" be reduced by Rs. 100. My object is to raise a discussion about the failure of the Government to provide necessary funds for giving relief to the teachers of non-Government secondary schools.

My honourable friend, Mr. Dhirendra Nath Datta, has given a graphic description of the lot of school teachers in Bengal. In order to understand the hard lot of a school teacher in Bengal let us consider the family budget of an average school teacher in normal times. He is a family man. His family perhaps consists of 7 or 8 members. He has perhaps two or three daughters, or two daughters of marriageable age. He has 3 children to whom education has to be given. There is malaria for which treatment is necessary. There is also a baby which has to be fed with milk. Now the average income of a school teacher, I would not put it higher than Rs. 25. Is a man with an income of Rs 25 reasonably expected to make his budget good? It must be a budget which should necessarily be a deficit budget, a more terribly deficit budget than the budget presented by the Hon'ble Finance Minister this year Now, Sir, if this is the state of his condition in normal times let us see what is the state of his condition in these extraordinary times. The roll strength of every school, I know, has fallen due to the extraordinary conditions Naturally the teacher's income has fallen and the value of money that he gets, whatever it might be, has fallen. The prices of foodstuffs and other necessaries of life have increased. Therefore, one might conclude that the teacher's income has been reduced by about 400 or 450 per cent. Can it be reasonably expected that a poor school teacher can make both his ends meet and can he safely keep wolf of hunger off from his door by the paltry income that he earns these days? Therefore, the question arises, do not the Government feel called upon to give some relief to the school teachers. Government have given dearness allowance to their people, and an honourable member has aptly called them to their "my dear people", but these school teachers are not considered fit to be given any relief. They gave relief to essential service people. Education is not an essential service, but they must not forget that there may be rehabilitation; economic rehabilitation may not take much time. If there is economic black out and if there is industrial black out, it may not take much time for rehabilitation. But if there is educational black out there is bound to be a situation where there is no hope for this province. I say, Sir, it behoves the Government to make some provision for these school teachers in the interest of the nation and not only in their own interest.

Mrs. NELLIE SEN GUPTA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have not much to add to what the two honourable members have just said. But it is true that the condition of the teachers is absolutely a deplorable one. Several of them came to me when I was at Barama Chittgaon. I asked them whether they had applied for help in any direction. They said that they had met Dr. Jenkins and asked him whether the question of payment of dearness

allowance to them could be supported by Government. But he said that he could do nothing. And when they asked him what he would advise them to do, Dr. Jenkins replied, "join the military"! Join the military. What does this mean, Sir? Does it mean that boys of tender age should have no education whatsoever? Does it mean that all boys in the country should remain without any education? Does it mean that you are going to neglect boys in the matter of their education? We have seen men and women in this land without food, without proper clothng and wthout anything to live on. Don't you think that ignorance has led people to a condition in which only such a state of affairs is possible. And now the condition of school teachers has almost reached that stage and you can well understand that they can have nothing but bitterness of a Government that has almost starved and reduced the teachers so as to compel them to join the military. I hope Dr. Jenkins will not blame the teachers for mentioning his name. Naturally when they came to me I asked them for particulars. They told me that when Dr. Jenkins had been there on inspection he was furnished with particulars. I asked them, "Did'nt you appeal to him to help you." They said that they did but that was the result. In fact, one of them said, "Everywhere you go it is dry land; you can only imagine the plight of teachers if you see them once." They have become thin; many of them were suffering from swollen feet and swollen legs simply because they have not had enough to eat. And after tremendous moving and pressure they were given ration cards for one month but I know that there was no ration after one week. I do hope that Government will consider very seriously either giving some help to the teachers so that they may have adequate ration to live on or at least give them a dearness allowance or an increase in their wages so that these people may be able to live and teach our boys and girls.

With these few words, Sir, I support the motion.

38—Medical.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 6,08,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "38—Medical" during the current year.

37—Education—General.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to speak on the demand under education by way of a reply to the debate under that head.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes.

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Sir, I agree with almost every word of the honourable the movers of the two cut motions as also of Mrs. Sen Gupta. There is no denying the fact that the teachers are in a very bad way and that they require every sympathy, assistance and encouragement. There can be no doubt about that. Last year I said that an attempt was made to help them, but the attempt proved to be abortive. It is unfortunate that the

finances of the province did not then permit us to do anything. We expected that the situation would be much better this year. Although the situation has improved, still I think, Sir, that the teachers deserve assistance and I shall be the happiest of men if I can do anything in that respect. And I can only say this much at the present time that a new scheme for giving relief to these teachers—not only teachers of secondary schools but also teachers of primary schools—who are not now receiving any dearness allowance, is now under the consideration of the Director of Public Instruction——

Sj. NARENDRA NATH DAS GUPTA: May we know when this scheme is going to be given effect to?

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: Although I have had consultations with the Director he has not yet formally put up his proposals before the Government. He will do it very soon and Government will try to come to a decision as early as possible. The difficulty as the honourable members can easily imagine is this: in this province the number of secondary schools is far larger than the number in any other province in India and as such the number of teachers is also far greater On a rough estimate the total number of teachers of secondary schools of all kinds is in the neighbourhood of 40,000. Now even if we give each of them a very small amount as dearness allowance that will come up to a very large amount and the House should remember that much as the teachers of secondary schools deserve assistance, teachers of primary schools deserve it in a far greater degree. Up till now we have been able to give a small assistance to not all but a small proportion of teachers of primary schools. There is still a large number who are not getting anything. Therefore, in the scheme referred to by me which is now under the consideration of the Director of Public Instruction, the question of giving something to the primary school teachers also has been included. The total amount therefore will be a very large sum although the amount of relief given to an individual teacher under the scheme will be very insignificant——

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: What is the amount that you have in mind?

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: I cannot say at the present moment what the amount will be.

Mr. ATUL CHANDRA SEN: Not even approximately?

The Hon'ble Mr. TAMIZUDDIN KHAN: If my honourable friend wants to know that, then I can say that even on a very moderate scale the total amount might come up in the neighbourhood of fifty lakhs of rupees. After all, that is not a small sum. Whether under the present financial situation of Bengal it will be possible for Government to spend that amount or not I do not know. But as the Minister in charge of Education I am vitally interested in this matter and I shall make a serious attempt to get this scheme when it is put up before Government passed by the Council of Ministers.

Sir, really education in Bengal is now passing through a crisis. People outside probably are not realising what harm is being done to future generations on account of the blow that the educational institutions have received and are receiving under the present crisis (Rai HARENDRA NATH CHAUDHURI: And will receive) and I can say that many secondary schools have now got

not even half the number of teachers that are necessary. Many of the teachers have deserted the institutions on account of the low pay paid to them and on account of better emoluments that they have been able to find elsewhere. We cannot blame them. Not only teachers of secondary schools but teachers of primary schools have similarly deserted their institutions. Therefore, that the situation is serious goes without saying and I can give this assurance to the House that every attempt will be made to see that something is given to this deserving class of people.

38—Medical.

Mr. SASANKA SEKHAR SANYAL: Sir, I beg to move that the sum of Rs. 6,08,000 for expenditure under the head "38—Medical" be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this to raise a discussion about Government's indifference to mofussil hospitals and dispensaries particularly in relation to the abnormal problems these have to cope with.

Sir, if the educational institutions have been neglected by Government, I should suppose that these hospitals and dispensaries in the mofussil have been practically abandoned. Ever since 1937 one of the points in which I entertained high hopes about the results of provincial autonomy was that the representative character of the Government would induce the Treasury benches to look after the basic institutions which are intended for giving relief to what are known as the masses of Bengal, but, Sir, I am not ashamed of confessing that in the year 1944 I find that the situation has not improved by an inch. Sir, ordinarily Government when framing budget always look more to the favoured institutions here and there, say some institution at Dacca or some other institution at some particular place, that is to say, persons who can exercise influence in the Cabinet or in the bigger parties who support the Cabinet succeed in getting subsidy from the Government in respect of certain favoured medical institutions, but the generality of these institutions are neither looked after nor cared for. The problem has been far too worse in view of the recent abnormal conditions. Many House Surgeons in the mofussil, specially in the sadar hospitals, who used to work on honorary basis have been absorbed either by the war or by the recent Government departments for destitute hospitals. I do not grudge the destitute hospitals nor the fact that these doctors get more than what they used to get in hospitals and dispensaries.

Then, Sir, the question that I want to place before the House today is, what is the Government going to do with regard to dispensaries. Sir, I happen to be the Vice-President of the Hospital Committee of my poor district of Murshidabad in respect of the Sadar Hospital. There were 10 honorary House Surgeons. They used to do their work as a matter of love. Some of them have left for the military and some of them have been absorbed by the Public Health Department and the Sadar Hospital, which ordinarily has got 85 seats indoors but which practically has to provide on an average for 150 seats throughout the year, has got to take in patients but there are no doctors to look after them.

Sir, this problem is a very burning problem and either the Government will have to carry on conscription of doctors for assisting the Sadar Hospitals either from inside the province or from outside, or these institutions of public

utility will practically be discontinued. I would implore the Hon'ble Minister to ask for the assistance of the Military to lend the services of those doctors who are enlisted but who are not in active service so that they may be available for doing good work in the day to day problems of these dispensaries and hospitals in the mofussil. He may also consider the question of importing doctors from outside this province. As a war-time emergency measure, compounders may be raised to a higher status so that they can give assistance in this matter. Government need not feel touchy because we know that the public are treated not only by compounders but even by quacks. So as a war-time emergency there is no harm in utilising the assistance of these people for a short time at least.

Sir, in the mofussil linen has practically run out in hospitals and dispensaries. If the Hon'ble Minister is good enough to pay a visit to any hospital —I can invite him to my hospital at Berhampore—he will find that one of the most respectable institutions not only of the district but also of the province is practically looking dried and withered. Straw beddings have to be improvised. There are no pillows and bricks have got to serve the purpose of pillows and the dietary allowances are such that the hospital is running into debts every day in order to give even barley water to the patients. I know from my experience that these dispensaries and hospitals have run into debts very much They are over head and ears in indebtedness and I will expect Government to look into the case of these dispensaries and hospitals and to find ways and means for taking off the debts of the hospitals and to try to liquidate them on behalf of the dispensaries.

Sir, the problems are far too numerous to be formulated and discussed within the short time that is available for me today, but I only urge upon the Hon'ble Minister to look into the matter himself and to see that the things which have already become bad do not become worse. It is high time and it is also a high occasion and it is a noble purpose to serve if the Hon'ble Minister will put his shoulders to the wheels

(At this stage the House was adjourned for 15 minutes.)

(*After adjournment.*)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Dr. Sanyal, do you want to move your motion or you will speak on Mr. Sanyal's motion?

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I will not. Practically everything that I wanted to speak has been covered by the previous speaker.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi JALALUDDIN AHMAD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am glad that my friend Mr. Sanyal has drawn attention to the deplorable condition of the mufassal hospitals especially in these abnormal times. The institutions are not being run efficiently. I can tell Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal for his information that we propose and we have decided to provincialise sadar hospitals and subdivisional hospitals for effecting improvement, because it is not possible for the municipalities and district boards themselves to contnue to dicharge their duties efficiently in the mufassal.

With regard to other mufassal hospitals Government have got only two mufassal hospitals—one is at Darjeeling and another is Dacca Mitford hospital. They are being run very efficiently. Another hospital which

strictly speaking is not in the mufassal but in greater Calcutta, namely, Sambhunath Hospital is also serving well, and in the Presidency we have got our hospitals. There is no difficulty with regard to that.

With regard to proper treatment of patients Mr. Sanyal should know that although it is not in the Supplementary Budget, it is under the Famine relief. I have already said in this House that emergency hospitals and other treatment centres are provided for under "Famine" and also under "Public Health". So, I do not think that Mr. Sanyal is right when he says that Government is indifferent to the conditions of the mufassal hospitals.

With these words I close my speech.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, may I request you and through you the Leader of the House that in view of the short time at our disposal we should proceed to discuss "54—Famine and 63—Extraordinary Charges" in India and thereafter at 6 o'clock all the other motions which we do not want to press may be formally moved and gone through, because it is not possible at this stage to go through all these demands and debates and convenience also demands that this procedure should be adopted.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think it will be better if I ask the Treasury Benches to move all the motions.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That would be done at 6 o'clock.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let them move their motions and then you will go on speaking on your motions.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Then we will not have any time. Sir, we want to deal with the more important items which we in the Opposition think it necessary to invite your attention to, and therefore we propose to discuss "Famine" and "Extraordinary charges" first and then at 6 o'clock all the other motions may be formally moved.

Mr. FAZLUR RAHMAN: Sir, I would suggest that the Hon'ble Ministers' motions may be formally moved by them first and then the Opposition may concentrate on certain demands.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, Sir Nazimuddin.

29—Police.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 11,78,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "29—Police" during the current year.

39—Public Health.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Sir, on behalf of the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi Jalaluddin Ahmad and on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 41,76,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "39—Public Health" during the current year.

40—Agriculture.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 59,03,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture" during the current year.

41—Veterinary.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 26,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "41—Veterinary" during the current year.

42—Co-operation.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath Mandal and on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 13,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "42—Co-operation" during the current year.

54—Famine.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 2,13,00,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" during the current year.

56—Stationery and Printing.

The Hon'ble Mr. TULSI CHANDRA GOSWAMI: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 7,12,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "56—Stationery and Printing" during the current year.

63—Extraordinary Charges in India.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 2,02,32,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" during the current year.

85A—Capital outlay on provincial schemes connected with the war, 1939.

The Hon'ble Khwaja Sir NAZIMUDDIN: Sir, on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy and on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 29,24,97,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "85A—Capital outlay on provincial schemes connected with the war, 1939" during the current year.

54—Famine.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I would respectfully request you once more to start with "54—Famine".

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: All right. I have no objection.

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 2,13,00,000 for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" during the current year be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this in order to raise a discussion about the (*i*) extreme inadequacy of the relief given, (*ii*) the method of distribution of relief, (*iii*) stopping of relief where relief is still necessary, (*iv*) failure of the Government to stop famine and to supply rice to the affected people though the rice was in the possession of the Government.

Sir, I do not like to speak anything on this motion. The motion speaks for itself.

Maulvi ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 2,13,00,000 for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" during the current year be reduced by Rs. 100. I move this in order to raise a discussion about Government's failure to tackle the food problem in famine time.

I submit, Sir, this year we did not get a famine only for the shortage of rice, but it is a famine all round. We do not get sugar, we do not get kerosene, we do not get salt, we do not get clothes and over and above that we do not get *atta* and rice. Therefore, as I have submitted, Sir, everything necessary for the human existence here in Bengal is scarce and it is very difficult to live in this province under the present Ministry. I would cite only one instance of my own district. If honourable members will please look to question No. 151, they will find that on the 30th November in my own district Government stock consisted of 22,000 maunds of paddy and 10,000 maunds of rice and the whole quantity was purchased in one district, viz., Rangpur by Government money, and I am in possession of information that during the anti-hoarding drive, Government froze near about 75,000 maunds of rice in one single district of Rangpur. This amount was neither taken over by Government, nor was an ounce of this quantity of paddy allowed to be sold or distributed amongst the neighbours. So, when about 32,000 maunds of rice and paddy were in Government stock and 75,000 maunds were frozen in the mufassal, in one single district, according to statistics supplied by one of the Government spokesmen, I mean Mr. M. Hossain Chowdhury, Secretary of the Muslim League Relief Committee, 50,000 people died only in the Nilphamari subdivision out of hunger. Taking an equal number in three other subdivisions, it is easy to presume that in all about 1 lakh of people died on account of direct and indirect effect of famine. May I now ask very seriously one pointed question: who is then responsible for the death of one lakh of people when Government had in their own stock and in the frozen stock in the district in all about 1 lakh of maunds of paddy and rice? Could not the Government find any machinery to distribute this large amount of paddy and rice to the unfortunate people? Will the Government give any explanation for this criminal negligence for not distributing paddy and rice which were in their stock? We also know that in Jessore district about 1,000 maunds of stock lying in railway stations were not distributed. If we take statistics of stocks all over the districts and all over the province of Bengal, it will be found that the amount of paddy and rice in Government stocks might have been sufficient enough to save the lives of all those people by giving them living diet. We repeatedly wanted a commission or an enquiry committee to ascertain the causes of this famine, but the Government refused

it, and I say for good reasons. If these things are enquired into and the causes ascertained, the criminal negligence of Government will come out. Again I warn the Government to take serious steps now to prevent a second famine. As I said things necessary for human life are not available in Bengal. Rice is sold at prohibitive prices. *Atta*, kerosene, salt and everything are wanting. Will the Government sit tight and then say "We have done enough"? I again warn the Government to take courage in both their hands and take help from all the parties to solve these serious problems.

With these words, I commend my motion for the acceptance of the House.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Sir, I was rather taken by surprise when I was told that this demand would be taken up out of its turn to have a discussion. I rather expected to have a brilliant speech from my esteemed friend, Mr. D. N. Datta, and so I was very anxious to hear him, but unfortunately I now find that he simply formally moved his cut motion without any speech. In the case of my esteemed friend, Mr. Abu Hossain Sarkar, unfortunately, Sir, his rifle which was directed against the Revenue Department's famine relief grant missed the target and throughout his speech he confined his observations to matters purely outside the purview of this Department, but concerned mainly and entirely the Civil Supplies Department: (Mr. ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: That is how you are avoiding responsibility.) I shall never avoid my responsibility. This is a very serious matter concerning the life and death question of the whole nation. I mean that famine relief is a most humanatarian subject which we are discussing today and I appeal to you to give me a little patient hearing. (Mr. ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: We have given you enough patient hearing.) I sympathise with my esteemed friend for his failure in getting supplies. He has failed to secure not only supplies of foodgrains but also supplies in the shape of support in his public activities.

Now, coming to the question proper, I would only say what the present Ministry, the present Government, have done and not what the previous Government did to relieve the distress of the people The reason for this anticipated excess expenditure under this head has been mentioned in the explanatory memorandum which has been circulated to members. I would only add that 78 temporary poor houses, 32 orphanages and 112 Work houses are at present functioning in the province for housing and feeding destitutes and orphans and also providing occupation for them. The number of these institutions is likely to be increased in connection with the rehabilitation scheme which is now under consideration.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: On a point of order, Sir. We did not like to raise these issues on today's debate because we wanted to postpone our judgment on these important matters when we would have a more prolonged period of time available to us. We only concentrated on one item only with regard to famine, namely, non-supply of food at the time of the last famine. We do not want to be debarred later on by a point of order raised by members of the Government party that during the same session the same subject cannot be discussed twice and therefore we deliberately avoided referring to items which we propose to take in greater detail in future.

The Hon'ble Mr. TARAK NATH MUKERJEA: Then I propose to finish it in a minute. Without entering into details of the activities of the Government for serving the suffering humanity, I would only conclude by mentioning that during the last famine Government subscribed nearly Rs. 1,98 lakhs for giving agricultural loans. (Mr. ABU HOSSAIN SARKAR: How many lakhs have you killed?) Government have made honest attempts as much and as far as possible to save the people. Government have spent Rs. 3,83,46,000 for rendering gratuitous relief and Rs. 1,26,07,000 for test relief work, in the different districts. I emphatically repudiate all charges and I maintain that Government have done its duty properly, honestly, sincerely, conscientiously and to the best of their ability.

"63—Extraordinary Charges in India".

Mr. DHIRENDRA NATH DATTA: Sir, I beg to move that the demand of Rs. 2,02,32,000 under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" be reduced by Rs. 100 to raise a discussion about (*i*) utter incompetence of the Department, (*ii*) stoppage of supply of kerosene, salt and other necessaries of life in the mofussil and (*iii*) the failure of the Government to control the price of rice.

It is extremely unfair to us to have the supplementary budget and the annual budget in the same session. It is difficult to speak because the other side may raise the point that the matter has been discussed and that it cannot be further discussed. It is extremely unfair to us. It is not only unfair to us but also it is really unconstitutional to have the discussion of supplementary estimates as well as the main budget in the same session. They should have been discussed in two different sessions. I think that it is unconstitutional to have them both in one session. However, Sir, I shall only deal with the stoppage of supply of kerosene, salt and other necessaries of life in the mofussil. I have already deal with salt and have said what I have to say regarding salt yesterday. The position is the same with regard to kerosene. In the mofussil really there is no kerosene and it is not available at all. What happens in the mofussil is that people are really living in utter darkness. With regard to the failure of controlled price of rice, really the Government is fully aware that the present controlled price of rice is Rs. 15 or Rs. 14, but rice is openly being sold in the markets at higher prices, the prices varying from Rs. 18 to Rs. 22. The Hon'ble Minister in charge is, I think, fully aware of this. The local authorities, namely, the District Magistrates and the Subdivisional Officers, are fully aware of this, and when the attention of the local authorities are drawn to this fact, they say that they are helpless. They further say, "If we try to control the price rice will not be available in the market." So, it is not the Government who are controlling the prices, but the price is really being controlled by other persons, may be, the agriculturists or the hoarders. So what is the meaning of fixing the maximum or the minimum price when the Government is not in a position to control the price? Really it is a matter which must engage the attention of the Government seriously, but in fact, if Government's attention is drawn to it, the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Civil Supplies Department says, it is a political propaganda. Even if their attention is drawn to facts, still the Government are not alive to the real situation: it is really regrettable. They say that it is our foolish

pessimism which is aggravating the situation. I know, pessimism is a bad thing, but I also know at the same time that foolish optimism is worse than that and false security is the worst enemy of humanity. I can tell the House that the price has not been controlled but the price is rather rising up in Bengal, and we shall have a great famine in Bengal in the near future.

With these words, Sir, I commend my motion to the acceptance of the House.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Sir, I rise to support this motion, and while doing it I would like to invite the attention of the House and particularly of the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Civil Supplies Department to two matters which I consider to be so urgent that attention must be directed to them immediately and we must not wait till we debate upon the main Budget subsequently. The one was with regard to our position in connection with the supply of cotton piecegoods and cloth in the mofussil as well as in Calcutta, and the other regarding the distribution of sugar and salt. With regard to salt I would not like to detain the House any more because we had some discussion on it on the previous day. As to salt, I do recognise, with regard to this article, the Government of Bengal's efforts in maintaining the supply in the province, and realise that the trouble has been mainly due to difficulties of transport and distribution in the mofussil, but with regard to cloth distribution the position is extremely unfortunate. Sir, we have the operation of the Government of India Cotton, Cloth and Yarn Control Order as well as the Bengal Government's subsequent order for cotton, cloth and yarn control. But the functionaries that are now entrusted with the work in detail have so far not given any evidence of exercising any judgment in setting up the necessary machinery for either controlling prices of the piecegoods in the market or ensuring their proper distribution in the mofussil. The other day I sought to raise through an adjournment motion an issue regarding the work of the Provincial Textile Controller in so far as that officer has stamped with a back date certain piecegoods belonging to a European firm, thereby enabling that firm to sell the goods in the Calcutta market without any determination of price on the piecegoods as is now required. The result has been very deplorable. We have a large number of Indian merchants who had not been in a position to dispose of the stock and their argument is that it was due to difficulties of transport out of Calcutta during these months that a large stock was lying unsold. The machinery set up by the Government so far has not properly been in a position to take action for stamping the goods and releasing them in the market. The result is that the mofussil merchants are not getting their supply. There has been a provision of 20 per cent. difference between the ex-mill price and the retailers' price. That percentage was allocated by the Government of India Order subsequently issued saying that 4 per cent. will be the margin over the ex-mill for wholesalers within a radius of 100 miles from the mill delivery points and for others 10 per cent. But in actual practice, here in Calcutta as well as outside, we know that the mills are charging much higher prices than that. A number of mills have been trying to get the advantage of retailers' prices being enjoyed by opening a number of retail shops in Calcutta and they are trying to take advantage of even up to 20 per cent. over the ex-mill prices.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: There is nothing to prevent that.

Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: I will tell you how to prevent this. I was connected with one of the biggest cotton mills in Bengal, and I have personal knowledge. Normally the dealers in Calcutta would accept even as low as one pice per pair for their margin of profit over the mill rate, and the Government of India, through their wisdom, had probably thought that they should allow 20 per cent. to cover all possible expenses right up to the retailers' point of sale in the mofussil. But taking advantage of the situation there was no actual stepping down of the price allocated for different categories of dealers and no actual decision was taken by the Government of Bengal. A large class of dealers are trying to get advantage of the entire 20 per cent. and the Calcutta dealers are charging something which is almost near about the retailers' price. As a result the retailers in the mofussil cannot find it possible to work within their price factor to get through their stock from Calcutta. The mofussil dealers cannot possibly take their stock at the prices now ruling in Calcutta and in addition bear the transport and other incidental charges and sell in the mofussil at the prices stated on the goods. The result is that the whole of Bengal mofussil is going dry. This matter requires immediate and urgent attention. Sir, on the top of that the Provincial Textile Controller has recently issued an order which was delivered only yesterday or the day before, over a number of Indian dealers peremptorily cancelling their licence without assigning any reason for the same. I presume the matter is now under the consideration of the Hon'ble Minister in charge and he will enquire into the matter and set things right.

(At this stage the member reached the time-limit but was allowed to conclude his speech.)

Sir, I will say only one word more and that with regard to the mal-distribution of sugar. We have represented to the Hon'ble Minister: the Hon'ble Minister has promised an enquiry, but the system is such that no enquiry can ever be made against any officer of the Government even on matters for which the Hon'ble Minister gave an assurance. I would like to know what has happened to the complaint made to him by the Indian Confectioners' Association and other dealers as well as big stockists of sugar in Calcutta regarding the mal-distribution of sugar.

The Hon'ble Mr. H. S. SUHRAWARDY: Regarding the last point, Sir, no complaint has reached me but I have heard that after a certain enquiry regarding the distribution of sugar certain unsavoury details have been discovered and I have asked for a full report to be sent up to me and I shall look into the matter.

A very important matter regarding cloth control has been raised by Dr. Sanyal. I am fully aware with what is going on and I am making an enquiry into the matter. But the real position why cloth has dried up is even worse than what has been stated by Dr. Sanyal. There are many firms here who charge the mofussil buyers even a price higher than the retail price. Obviously these mofussil traders cannot purchase and sell cloth at the retail price in the rural areas and this is one of the reasons why there is such a dearth of cloth in these areas. Unfortunately, it is extremely difficult to get evidence on the point, and in spite of all my attempts and

inducements dealers are not prepared to come forward and point out the people who refuse to hand over the cloth to them at controlled prices. Sir, latterly one such person assisted us in tracking down one of these miscreants. We have started criminal proceedings against the man, and all his cloth has been requisitioned and sold at marked prices. I propose dealing in this manner with all persons who do not sell at marked prices and take unfair advantage of the situation. I have already spoken to many persons who came to me on behalf of these cloth merchants that we are not going to show the slightest mercy in this regard, and any person whom we find has contravened these Texmarks will be proceeded against.

Now, Sir, a point has been raised by Dr. Sanyal that many of these persons instead of charging 10 per cent. which is the wholesaler's charge, have charged anything between 10 per cent. and 20 per cent. and moreover they have opened retail shops of their own. We cannot prevent them from opening retail shops of their own and appropriating the whole of the 20 per cent. but as regards the charge between 10 and 20 per cent. their case appears to be that they did not know how much they could actually charge and the fact that they could only charge 10 per cent. was not brought to their notice, and so on. An investigation is being conducted into the transactions of all persons since the issue of the notice, which is, I believe, is the 28th January, 1944, who have charged above 10 per cent. and steps have been taken against them. There have been a number of arrests, no bail is being given, and the cancellation of licences which Dr. Sanyal has referred to has been due to this, namely, that they have been caught selling at more than 10 per cent. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Not all of them.) I am not quite certain whether they have equities in their favour or not. This is a matter which has been represented to me and I am making an enquiry into it.

Now, Dr. Sanyal has again come back to the charge that there was some cloth which had been stamped with a back date and which belonged to a European firm and which enabeld the European firm to sell that cloth without any marked price. Now, Sir, this is a very, very serious charge and it is a matter which I shall be very happy to investigate. I want further particulars regarding this. This is a question which I have already taken up with the Textile Controller. I have not yet received his report but if Dr. Sanyal or any one who is in possession of these facts gives me further particulars as to how he came to know about all this and how—— (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: That is why I brought those pieces to show you.) That was unnecessary. By showing the pieces here on the floor of the House you cannot say when the thing has been stamped. Your case is that it has been stamped with a back date. It is no use your saying—— (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Because Bengal Government had no authority to stamp in November.) That is a very important point. I will make an enquiry into it. I can assure you that if action has been taken by any officer which he had no right to do and which savours even of dishonesty, he will be dealt with. (Dr. NALINAKSHA SANYAL: Their plea is that this form has been sanctioned by the Government of India and they have got the Government of India's orders.) Whether there is a plea or not I will look into the matter and I am quite ready to hear Dr. Sanyal in full in this matter.

Sir, I believe that this is practically all the new points which have been raised. Other members reiterated their usual flashy speeches regarding control price and foolish optimism. There is no foolish optimism on the part of any one.

(The Hon'ble Minister had not concluded his speech when the guillotine fell.)

5—Salt.

The motion of Mr. Dhirendra Nath Datta that the demand of Rs. 23,000 for expenditure under the head "5—Salt" during the current year be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Khan Bahadur Haji Badi Ahmed Chowdhury that the demand of Rs. 23,000 for expenditure under the head "5—Salt" during the current year be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Maulvi Abu Hussain Sarkar that the demand of Rs. 23,000 for expenditure under the head "5—Salt" during the current year be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja Shahabuddin that a sum of Rs. 23,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "5—Salt" during the current year was then put and agreed to.

7—Land Revenue.

The motion of Khan Bahadur Haji Badi Ahmed Chowdhury that the demand of Rs. 6,69,000 for expenditure under the head "7—Land Revenue" during the current year be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Pramatha Nath Banerjee that the demand of Rs. 6,69,000 for expenditure under the head "7—Land Revenue" during the current year be reduced by Rs. 100, which was moved to raise a discussion about the failure of the Government to give relief to tenants and proprietors of the soil in the matter of rent due to calamities in the Province such as (*i*) famine, cyclone and flood and (*ii*) failure of the Government to make adequate provision and arrangement including compensation for the civilian population in areas acquired or properties acquired or requisitioned for purposes connected with the war was then put and a division taken with the following result:—

AYES—78.

Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mia.
Abdul Hamid Shah, Maulvi.
Abdul Kader, Mr. (alias Lal Miah).
Abdul Majid, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Wahed, Maulvi.
Abdur Razzak, Maulvi.
Abu Hossain Sarkar, Maulvi.
Acharyya Chowdhury, Maharaja Bashi Kanta, of Muktagacha, Mymensingh.
Ahmed Ali Enayetpuri, Khan Bahadur Maulana.
Ahmed Khan, Mr. Syed.
Azimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Azhar Ali, Maulvi.
Badruddoja, Mr. Syed.
Banerjee, Mr. Pramatha Nath.
Banerji, Mr. P.
Barat Ali, Mr. Md.
Barma, Mr. Puspajit.
Basu, Mr. Santosh Kumar.
Bhowmik, Dr. Gobinda Chandra.
Biswas, Mr. Surendra Nath.
Chattopadhyay, Mr. Haripada.
Chaudhuri, Rai Harendra Nath.
Das, Babu Radhanath.
Dasgupta, Dr. J. N.
Das Gupta, Srijut Narendra Nath.
Datta, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Deloi, Mr. Harendra Nath.
Dutta, Mr. Sukumar.
Dutta Gupta, Miss Mira.
Fazlul Huq, Mr. A. K.
Ghose, Mr. Atul Krishna.
Giasuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Golam Rabbani Ahammad, Maulvi.
Gyasuddin Ahmed Chowdhury, Alhaj.
Habibullah, Nawab Bahadur K., of Dacca.
Hasan Ali Chowdhury, Mr. Syed.
Hashem Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Jalan, Mr. I. D.
Jonab Ali Majumdar, Maulvi.
Khan, Mr. Debendra Lall.
Kunda, Mr. Nishitha Nath.
Lahiri, Babu Ashutosh.
Maji, Mr. Advaita Kumar.
Majumdar, Mrs. Hemaprova.
Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra.

Mahmuzzaman Islamabadi, Maulana Md.
Majid Hossain, Mr.
Mookherjee, Dr. Syamaprasad.
Muhammad Afzal, Khan Bahadur Maulvi Syed.
Muhammad Ibrahim, Maulvi.
Muhammad Sulaiman, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Mukerji, Mr. Dhirendra Narayan.
Mukherji, Dr. Sharat Chandra.
Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh.
Mustafa Ali Dewan, Maulvi.
Nasker, Mr. Hem Chandra.
Ramiruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Charu Chandra.
Roy, Mr. Kamalkrishna.
Roy, Mr. Kiran Sankar.
Roy, Mr. Manmatha Nath.
Roy, Mr. Patiram.
Roy, Shib Shekhareswar, Kumar.
Sanyal, Dr. Nalinaksha.
Sanyal, Mr. Sasanka Sekhar.
Sen, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Sen, Jogesh Chandra, Rai Bahadur.
Sen-Gupta, Mrs. Nellie.
Shamsuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khodkar, Mr.
Shamsul Huda, Maulana.
Sinha, Srijut Manindra Bhusan.
Sur, Mr. Narendra Kumar.
Thakur, Mr. Pramatha Ranjan.
Totai Ahmed Choudhury, Maulvi Haji.
Wahiar Rahman, Maulvi.
Yousuf Mirza.
Zaman, Mr. A. M. A.

NOES—106.

Abdul Aziz, Maulana Md.
Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.
Abdul Hakim, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri, Maulvi Md.
Abdul Hamid, Mr. A. M.
Abdul Jabbar, Maulvi.
Abdul Karim, Mr.
Abdul Latif Biswas, Maulvi.
Abdul Majid, Mr. Syed (Noakhali).
Abdul Mutaleb Malik, Dr.
Abdul Wahab Khan, Khan Bahadur.
Abdulla-Al Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rahman, Khan Bahadur, A. F. M.
Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, Mr.
Abdur Rauchid Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rasheed, Maulvi Md.
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Maulvi S. (Howrah).
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Shah (Rangpur).
Abdus Shaheed, Maulvi Md.
Abul Fazl, Mr. Md.
Abul Hashim, Maulvi.
Abul Hosain Ahmed, Mr.
Abul Masud, Kazi.
Abul Quasem, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali Mridha, Maulvi.
Ahmed Hossain, Mr.
Alfazuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Amir Ali Mia, Maulvi Md.
Anwarul Azim, Khan Bahadur Md.
Barma, the Hon'ble Mr. Prombari.
Birkmyre, Sir Henry, Bart.
Biswas, Babu Lakshmi Narayan.
Biswas, Mr. Rashik Lal.
Chakraborty, Babu Narendra Narayan.
Chippendale, Mr. J. W.
Clark, Mr. I. A.
Das, Rai Sahib Anukul Chandra.
Das, Rai Sahib Kiriti Bhusan.
Dass, Babu Debendra Nath.
Farhad Raza Chowdhury, Mr. M.
Farhat Bano Khanam, Begum.
Fazlal Quadir, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Fazlar Rahman, Mr. (Dacca).
Fazlar Rahman, Mr. (Mymensingh).
Gheeding, Mr. D., C.I.E.
Gomes, Mr. R. A.
Goswami, the Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra.
Griffiths, Mr. G.
Gupta, Mr. J. N.
Gurung, Mr. Damber Singh.
Hafizuddin Choudhuri, Maulvi.
Hamiduddin Ahmed, Khan Sahib.
Hasina Morshed, Mrs. M.B.E.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Haywood, Mr. Rogers.
Hendry, Mr. David.
Ispahani, Mr. M. A. H., M.B.E.
Jalaluddin Ahmad, the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Jasimuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kazem Ali Mirza, Sahibzada Kawan Jah Syed.
Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Leigh, Mr. John.
Mcpherson, Mr. G. P.
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Khan Sahib Maulvi (Tippera).
Mandal, Mr. Amrita Lal.
Mandal, Mr. Banku Behari.
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra.
Mandal, the Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath.
Mandal, Mr. Krishna Prasad.
Maniruddin Akhand, Maulvi.
Mohammed Ali, Khan Bahadur.
Moslem Ali Mollah, Maulvi M.
Mohammad Abdul Halim Molla, Mr.
Mohammad Ishaque, Maulvi.
Muhammad Israil, Maulvi.
Muhammad Siddique, Khan Bahadur Dr. Syed.
Mukerjea, the Hon'ble Mr. Taraknath, M.B.E.
Mullick, Mr. Muhunda Behari.
Mullick, the Hon'ble Mr. Pulin Behari.
Musharruf Hossain, the Hon'ble Nawab, Khan Bahadur.
Nasarullah, Nawabzada K.
Nazimuddin, the Hon'ble Khawaja Sir, K.C.I.E.
Noorudin, Mr. K.
Norton, Mr. H. R., M.B.E.
Pain, the Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prasanna.
Raikut, Mr. Prasanna Deb.
Roy, Mr. Dhananjoy.
Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Safiruddin Ahmed, Haji.
Sahebe Alam, Mr. Syed.
Salim, Mr. S. A.
Sarkar, Babu Madhusudan.
Serajul Islam, Mr.
Shahabuddin, the Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja, C.B.E.
Shahedali, Mr.
Singha, Babu Kshetra Nath.
Sirder, Babu Litta Munda.
Skipwith, Mr. W. E.
Smart, Mr. J. N.
Stark, Mr. A. F.
Suhrawardy, the Hon'ble Mr. H. S.
Stevenson, Mr. R. A. H.
Tamizuddin Khan, the Hon'ble Mr.
Thorman, Mr. G. M.
Walker, Mr. W. A. M., C.B.E.
Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr.

The Ayes being 78 and the Noes 106, the motion was lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tarak Nath Mukerjea that a sum of Rs. 6,69,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "7—Land Revenue" during the current year, was then put and agreed to.

9—Stamps.

The motion of Khan Bahadur Haji Badi Ahmed Chowdhury that the demand of Rs. 1,30,000 for expenditure under the head "9—Stamps" during the current year be reduced by Rs. 100, was then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tarak Nath Mukerjea that a sum of Rs. 1,30,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "9—Stamps" during the current year, was then put and agreed to.

10—Forest.

The motion of Mr. Dhirendra Nath Datta that the demand of Rs. 11,97,000 for expenditure under the head "10—Forest" during the current year be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Premhari Barma that a sum of Rs. 11,97,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "10—Forest" during the current year, was then put and agreed to.

11—Registration.

The motion of Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal that the demand of Rs. 3,90,000 under the head "11—Registration" be reduced by Rs. 100 which was moved to raise a discussion about the necessity of a proper enquiry into the circumstances leading to a large increase in the number of registrations and measures to check the same was then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tamizuddin Khan that a sum of Rs. 3,90,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "11—Registration" during the current year was then put and agreed to.

13—Other Taxes and Duties.

The motion of Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal that the demand of Rs. 63,000 under the head "13—Other Taxes and Duties" be reduced by Rs. 100 which was moved to raise a discussion about the hardship caused through the present procedure adopted to deal with registered dealers under the Bengal Finance Sales Tax Act who had left Calcutta temporarily during the emergency of 1942-43 and came back thereafter, was then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tarak Nath Mukerjea that a sum of Rs. 63,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "13—Other Taxes and Duties" during the current year was then put and agreed to.

Irrigation—18—Other Revenue Expenditure financed from ordinary Revenues.

The motion of Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal that the demand of Rs. 32,73,000 under the head "Irrigation—18—Other Revenue Expenditure financed from ordinary Revenues" be reduced by Rs. 100 which was moved to raise a discussion about unsatisfactory character of the immediate protective measures on the left bank of the Damodar was then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prosanna Pain that a sum of Rs. 32,73,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "Irrigation—18—Other Revenue Expenditure financed from ordinary Revenues" was then put and agreed to.

25—General Administration.

The motion of Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal that the demand of Rs. 6,35,000 under the head "25—General Administration" be reduced by Rs. 100

which was moved to raise a discussion about the urgency of grants for enabling union boards to pay dearness allowance to chowkidars during the emergency was then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin that a sum of Rs. 6,35,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "25—General Administration" during the current year was then put and agreed to.

27—Administration of Justice.

The motion of Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal that the demand of Rs. 4,47,000 under the head "27—Administration of Justice" be reduced by Rs. 100 which was moved to raise a discussion about wastefulness and irresponsibility in the engagement of lawyers for the Crown as revealed in connection with several cases including Pollard case and Security Prisoners' Habeas Corpus applications was then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Nawab Musharruff Hossain, Khan Bahadur, that a sum of Rs. 4,47,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "27—Administration of Justice" during the current year was then put and agreed to.

28—Jails and Convict Settlements.

The motion of Mr. Atul Chandra Sen that the demand of Rs. 78,17,000 under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100 which was moved to raise a discussion about bad diet supplied to prisoners and overcrowding of jails far beyond their capacities was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Atul Chandra Sen that the demand of Rs. 78,17,000 under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100 which was moved to raise a discussion about the inadequacy in the provision for proper amenities to prisoners in jails including security prisoners regarding food, clothing, etc., and insufficiency of provisions regarding sanitary arrangements and congestion in jails was then put and lost.

The motion of Dr. Nalinaksha Sanyal that the demand of Rs. 78,17,000 under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" be reduced by Rs. 100 which was moved to raise a discussion about the urgency of a proper and independent enquiry into (*a*) allegations of charging higher than controlled prices from security prisoners in the jails, (*b*) working of the Tribunal for reviewing the cases of security prisoners and (*c*) increase in the jail population was then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin that a sum of Rs. 78,17,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements" during the current year was then put and agreed to.

29—Police.

The motion of Mr. Pramatha Nath Banerjee that the demand of Rs. 11,78,000 under the head "29—Police" be reduced by Rs. 100 to raise a discussion about the failure of the Government in the matter of the removal of the victims of the last famine in Bengal, in the matter of disposal of dead bodies of destitutes, in the matter of preparing and maintaining statistics of the victims of the famine was then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin that a sum of Rs. 11,78,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "29—Police" during the current year was then put and agreed to.

30—Ports and Pilotage.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra Goswami on behalf of the Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja Shahabuddin that a sum of Rs. 1,52,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "30—Ports and Pilotage" during the current year was then put and agreed to.

37—Education—General.

The motion of Mr. Dhirendra Nath Datta that the demand of Rs. 7,89,000 under the head "37—Education—General" be reduced by Rs. 100 which was moved to raise a discussion about the failure of the Government in giving relief to the teachers of the non-Government Secondary Schools and about the inadequate relief sought to be given to schools whose buildings had been damaged by floods, etc., was then put and lost.

The motion of Mr. Atul Chandra Sen that the demand of Rs. 7,89,000 under the head "37—Education—General" be reduced by Rs. 100 which was moved to raise a discussion about the failure of the Government to provide necessary funds for giving relief to the teachers of non-Government Secondary Schools was then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tamizuddin Khan that a sum of Rs. 7,89,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "37—Education—General" during the current year was then put and agreed to.

38—Medical.

The motion of Mr. Sasanka Sekhar Sanyal that the demand of Rs. 6,08,000 for expenditure under the head "38—Medical" during the current year, be reduced by Rs. 100 which was moved to raise a discussion about Government's indifference to motussil hospitals and dispensaries particularly in relation to the abnormal problems these have to cope with, was then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi Jalaluddin Ahmad that a sum of Rs. 6,08,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "38—Medical" during the current year, was then put and agreed to.

39—Public Health.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra Goswami that a sum of Rs. 41,76,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "39—Public Health" during the current year, was then put and agreed to.

40—Agriculture.

The motion of the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed Muazzamuddin Hosain that a sum of Rs. 59,03,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "40—Agriculture" during the current year, was then put and agreed to.

41—Veterinary.

The motion of the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyed Muazzamuddin Hosain that a sum of Rs. 26,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "41—Veterinary" during the current year was then put and agreed to.

42—Co-operation.

The motion of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin that a sum of Rs. 13,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "42—Co-operation" during the current year, was then put and agreed to.

54—Famine.

The motion of Mr. Dhirendra Nath Datta that the demand of Rs. 2,13,00,000 for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" during the current year be reduced by Rs. 100 which was moved to raise a discussion

about (*i*) the extreme inadequacy of the relief given, (*ii*) the method of distribution of relief, (*iii*) stopping of relief where relief is still necessary, (*iv*) failure of the Government to stop famine and to supply rice to the affected people though the rice was in the possession of the Government was then put and lost.

The motion of Maulvi Abu Hossain Sarker that the demand of Rs. 2,13,00,000 for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" during the current year, be reduced by Rs. 100, which was moved to raise a discussion about Government's failure to tackle the food problem in famine time, was then put and a division taken with the following result:—

AYES—78.

Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mia.
Abdul Hamid Shah, Maulvi.
Abdul Kader, Mr. (alias Lal Meah).
Abdul Majid, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Wahed, Maulvi.
Abdur Razzak, Maulvi.
Abu Hossain Sarkar, Maulvi.
Acharyya Choudhuri, Maharaja Sashi Kanta, of Muktagacha, Mymensingh.
Ahmed Ali Enayetpuri, Khan Bahadur Maulana.
Ahmed Khan, Mr. Syed.
Asimuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Azhar Ali, Maulvi.
Badruddoja, Mr. Syed.
Banerjee, Mr. Pramatha Nath.
Banerji, Mr. P.
Barat Ali, Mr. Md.
Barma, Mr. Puspajit.
Basu, Mr. Santosh Kumar.
Bhawmik, Dr. Gobinda Chandra.
Biswas, Mr. Surendra Nath
Chattopadhyay, Mr. Haripada.
Chaudhuri, Rai Harendra Nath.
Das, Babu Radhanath.
Das Gupta, Dr. J. M.
Das Gupta, Srijut Narendra Nath.
Datta, Mr. Dhirendra Nath.
Dolui, Mr. Harendra Nath.
Dutta, Mr. Sukumar.
Dutta Gupta, Miss Mira.
Fazlul Huq, Mr. A. K.
Ghose, Mr. Atul Krishna.
Giasuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Golam Rabbani Ahammad, Maulvi.
Gyasuddin Ahmed Choudhury, Alhaj.
Habibullah, Nawab Bahadur K. of Dacca.
Hasan Ali Choudhury, Mr. Syed.
Hashem Ali Khan, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Jaian, Mr. I. D.
Jonab Ali Majumdar, Maulvi.
Khan, Mr. Debendra Lall.
Kundu, Mr. Nishitha Nath.
Lahiri, Babu Ashutosh.
Maji, Mr. Adwaita Kumar.
Majumdar, Mrs. Hemaprova.
Mandal, Mr. Birat Chandra.
Maniruzzaman Islamabadi, Maulana Md.
Maqbul Hosain, Mr.
Mookerjee, Dr. Syamaprasad.
Muhammad Afzal, Khan Bahadur Maulvi Syed.
Muhammad Ibrahim, Maulvi.
Muhammad Sulaiman, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Mukerji, Mr. Dhirendra Narayan.
Mukherji, Dr. Sharat Chandra.
Mullick, Srijut Ashutosh.
Mustafa Ali Dewan, Maulvi.
Nasker, Mr. Hem Chandra.
Paul, Sir Hari Sanker.
Poddar, Mr. Anandilal.
Ramizuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Charu Chandra.
Roy, Mr. Kamalkrishna.
Roy, Mr. Kiran Sankar.
Roy, Mr. Manmatha Nath.
Roy, Mr. Patiram.
Sanyal, Dr. Nalinaksha.
Sanyal, Mr. Sasanka Sekhar.
Sen, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Sen, Jogesh Chandra, Rai Bahadur.
Sen-Gupta, Mrs. Nellie.
Shamsuddin Ahmed, Mr.
Shamsuddin Ahmed Khondkar, Mr.
Shamsul Huda, Maulana.
Sinha, Srijut Manindra Bhusan.
Sur, Mr. Harendra Kumar.
Thakur, Mr. Pramatha Ranjan.
Waliur Rahman, Maulvi.
Yousuf Mirza.
Zaman, Mr. A. M. A.

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Abdul Aziz, Maulana Md.
Abdul Hafiz, Mr. Mirza.
Abdul Hakim, Maulvi (Mymensingh).
Abdul Hakim Vikrampuri, Maulvi Md.
Abdul Hamid, Mr. A. M.
Abdul Jabbar, Maulvi.
Abdul Karim, Mr.
Abdul Latif Biswas, Maulvi.
Abdul Majid, Mr. Syed (Noakhali).
Abdul Motaleb Malik, Dr.
Abdul Wahab Khan, Khan Bahadur.
Abdulla-Al Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rahman, Khan Bahadur A. F. M.
Abdur Rahman Siddiqi, Mr.
Abdur Rashid Mahmood, Mr.
Abdur Rasheed, Maulvi Md.
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Maulvi S. (Howrah).
Abdur Rauf, Khan Bahadur Shah (Rangpur).
Abdus Shaheed, Maulvi Md.
Abul Fazl, Mr. Md.
Abul Hashim, Maulvi.
Abul Hosain Ahmed, Mr.
Abul Masud, Kazi.
Abul Quasem, Maulvi.
Ahmed Ali Miridha, Maulvi.
Ahmed Hosain, Mr.
Alfazuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Amir Ali Mia, Maulvi Md.
Anwarul Azim, Khan Bahadur Md.
Barma, the Hon'ble Mr. Premhari.
Birkmyre, Sir Henry, Bart.
Biswas, Babu Lakshmi Narayan.
Biswas, Mr. Rasik Lal.
Chakraborty, Babu Narendra Narayan.

Chippendale, Mr. J. W.
Clark, Mr. I. A.
Das, Rai Sahib Anukul Chandra.
Das, Rai Sahib Kirit Bhusan.
Dass, Babu Debendra Nath.
Farhad Raza Chowdhury, Mr. M.
Farhat Bano Khanam, Begum.
Fazlul Quadir, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Dacca).
Fazlur Rahman, Mr. (Mymensingh).
Gladding, Mr. D., C.I.E.
Gomes, Mr. R. A.
Goswami, the Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra.
Griffiths, Mr. C.
Gupta, Mr. J. N.
Gurung, Mr. Damber Singh.
Hafizuddin Choudhuri, Maulvi.
Hamiduddin Ahmed, Khan Sahib.
Hasina Murshed, Mrs., M.B.E.
Hatemally Jamadar, Khan Sahib Maulvi.
Haywood, Mr. Rogers.
Hendry, Mr. David.
Ispahani, Mr. M. A. H., M.B.E.
Jalaluddin Ahmed, the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Jasimuddin Ahmed, Khan Bahadur Maulvi.
Kazem Ali Mirza, Sahibzada Kawan Jah Syed.
Kumar, Mr. Atul Chandra.
Leish, Mr. John.
Mepherson, Mr. G. P.
Mafizuddin Ahmed, Khan Sahib Maulvi (Tippera).
Mandal, Mr. Amrita Lal.
Mandal, Mr. Banku Behari.
Mandal, Mr. Jagat Chandra.
Mandal, the Hon'ble Mr. Jogendra Nath.
Mandal, Mr. Krishna Prasad.
Maniruddin Akhand, Maulvi.
Masud Ali Khan Pannni, Al-Hadj Maulvi.
Mohammed Ali, Khan Bahadur.
Mosiem Ali Mollah, Maulvi M.
Muhammad Abdul Halim Molla, Mr.
Muhammad Ishaque, Maulvi.
Muhammad Israil, Maulvi.
Muhammad Siddique, Khan Bahadur Dr. Syed.
Mukerjea, the Hon'ble Mr. Tarakeath, M.B.E.
Mullick, Mr. Mukunda Behary.
Mullick, the Hon'ble Mr. Pulin Behary.
Musharruff Hossain, the Hon'ble Nawab, Khan Bahadur.
Nasaruddin, Nawabzada K.
Nazimuddin, the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir, K.C.I.E.
Noorudin, Mr. K.
Norton, Mr. H. R., M. B. E.
Pain, the Hon'ble Mr. Barada Prasanna.
Raikut, Mr. Prasanna Deb.
Razaur Rahman Khan, Mr.
Roy, Mr. Dhananjoy.
Sadaruddin Ahmed, Mr.
Safiruddin Ahmed, Haji.
Sahebe-Alam, Mr. Syed.
Salim, Mr S. A.
Sarkar, Babu Madhusudan.
Serajul Islam Mr.
Shahabuddin, the Hon'ble Mr. Khwaja, C.B.E.
Shahedali, Mr.
Singha, Babu Kshetra Nath.
Sirdar, Babu Litta Munda.
Skipwith, Mr. W. E.
Smart, Mr. J. N.
Stark, Mr. A. F.
Suhrawardy, the Hon'ble Mr. H. S.
Stevenson, Mr. R. A. H.
Tamizuddin Khan, the Hon'ble Mr.
Thorman, Mr. C. M.
Walker, Mr. W. A. M., C. B. E.
Yusuf Ali Choudhury, Mr.

The Ayes being 78 and the Noes 108, the motion was lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tarak Nath Mukerjea that a sum of Rs. 2,13,00,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "54—Famine" during the current year was then put and agreed to.

56—Stationery and Printing.

The motion of the Hon'ble Mr. Tulsi Chandra Goswami that a sum of Rs. 7,12,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "56—Stationery and Printing" during the current year was then put and agreed to.

63—Extraordinary Charges in India.

The motion of Mr. Dhirendra Nath Datta that the sum of Rs. 2,02,32,000 for expenditure under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" during the current year be reduced by Rs. 100 was then put and lost.

The motion of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin that a sum of Rs. 2,02,32,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "63—Extraordinary Charges in India" during the current year was then put and agreed to.

85A—Capital Outlay on provincial schemes connected with the war, 1939.

The motion of the Hon'ble Khwaja Sir Nazimuddin that a sum of Rs. 29,24,97,000 be granted for expenditure under the head "5—Capital Outlay on provincial schemes connected with the war, 1939" during the current year, was then put and agreed to.

Adjournment.

The House was then adjourned at 6-40 p.m. till 3-30 p.m. on Monday, the 13th March, 1944, at the Assembly House, Calcutta.

BGP-44/5-274A-600

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